THE CHILD AND THE BOOK

Agnes Junkin Peery Emily J. Werner

Book I

WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

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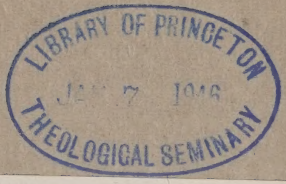

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THE CHILD AND THE BOOK:

A Teachers' Guide in the Christian Education of Ten, Eleven, Twelve, and Thirteen-Year-Olds

YEAR ONE

For Ten-Year-Olds

WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

Agnes Junkin Peery

Emily J. Werner

THE CHILD AND THE BOOK

OUTLINE OF COURSE

YEAR ONE—WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

YEAR TWO—THE BIBLE

YEAR THREE—WHAT CHRIST MEANS TO THE PRESENT-DAY WORLD

YEAR FOUR—THE CHRISTIAN CITIZEN

SUPPLEMENT (for all four years)—

- Appreciation
- Explanation of Course: Our Reason for Being
- General Outline of Four-Year Course
- Practical Suggestions
- Helpful Books for Teachers and Children
- Classified Story and Poem Index
- Picture Sources
- An Extra Story

YEAR ONE: WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

GENERAL OBJECTIVE'S OF THE YEAR'S WORK:

To lead the children into a growing knowledge of God, of His will for man, and of the church as His instrument

To arouse in them the desire to worship Him, to do His will, and to participate in the work of His church

To give them experiences of worship, practice in the doing of His will, and opportunity for service in their community and in the world.

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Unit I

WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

(A Study of Stories in Genesis and the First Part of Exodus, Climaxed by a Study of the Story of the Coming of Christ.)

OBJECTIVES:

To lead the children into a growing conception of the nature of God, as revealed through His handiwork, His dealings with men, and the coming of His Son

To lead them into deepening appreciation and love of God

To lead them to practice the Presence of God in worship and conduct

The questions indicated in the Table of Contents under this Unit will help the children to discover the answers to the question, What Is God Like?

POSSIBLE UNIFYING ACTIVITIES:

Making a class book in which can be recorded the answers to the question, "What is God like?"

Making a "stained glass window" out of cardboard, glass, or cardboard and cellophane, in which can be pictured each week's answer to the question

Dramatizing the stories studied, each dramatization revealing a different aspect of God's character as it shows itself in His dealings with men

Making "lantern slides": silhouettes and frames of cardboard, painted black, against a background of tissue paper of any color suited to the picture

Making a frieze or long scroll on which the question, "What is God like?", is answered in statements, pictures, stories, and poems

Writing original poems, stories, and songs showing what God is like

(Any one of these activities might well culminate in a concluding service of worship.)

SUGGESTIONS FOR NOTEBOOK WORK:

As each question is asked, it would be well to lead the children to answer it in their own notebooks in stories, pictures, or in any manner that appeals to the individual child.

THEME HYMN FOR UNIT:

Our God, Our Help in Ages Past

UNIT MEMORY WORK:

Selected portions of Psalm 103

INTRODUCTORY SESSION:
LAUNCHING THE UNIT AS A WHOLE

Setting the Stage:

Pictures depicting man's universal consciousness of God might do much toward starting the children on their queries concerning the nature of God. Pictures such as the following, if displayed in the class-room, would prove to be exceedingly stimulating:

"Prayer in the Desert"
"Appeal to the Great Spirit"
The Altar of Heaven in Peiping
An African image
An Egyptian temple
A Japanese temple or shrine
A modern cathedral
A country church
"The Angelus"—Millet

As each picture is commented upon by the children, the teacher might ask questions such as "Why did the Africans make an image of a god?" "Why is there no image on the Chinese Altar of Heaven?" "What do you think the Mohammedan feels about God?" "The Indian?" "What did the people who built this great cathedral feel about God?" "Why do people build little country churches like this?"

As each question is answered, the teacher might record its central thought on the board. After all the pictures have been discussed there will be a list of quite varied ideas of God. The teacher might well, now, if no child has already asked it, bring up the question, "What *is* God like?"

Following this question there will be numerous answers giving the children's own conceptions. These should all be listed on the board where they will cause comment by their obvious contradictions.

The children will now be ready to go to some authority to settle their own conflicts and to clarify their thinking. If they do not suggest turning to the Bible, the teacher could very naturally do so.

Formulating a Purpose:

The question, "What is God like?", has already been asked and the class has decided that the Bible will probably throw light on the subject. The teacher may now simply say, with the assurance that she is expressing the purpose of the class, "Shall we spend the next few weeks studying some of the stories in our Bible to find out what God is truly like?"

Planning Activities:

"How shall we keep a record of the things we discover and how shall we share with others what we learn these next few weeks?" is the next question to be considered. If the children have been used to creative activity, they will probably have many suggestions of their own to offer. The teacher can supplement these suggestions with some of hers and, with the complete list on the board, allow the children to discuss each and vote on the one or ones they wish to follow. Specific planning of details and the choosing of individual and committee responsibilities might come here or might be left for the next class session.

Climaxing in Worship:

The children should not feel that they are going into this study alone or that they, by their own intellectual exertion, can plumb the depths of God's nature. They should, at the very outset, feel that God will be with them to guide their thinking if they truly desire His help. Because of this fact, this opening session should not close without a period of worship.

A Story Suggestion:

THE UNKNOWN GOD

Steps in the Story:

Acts 17:16:	Paul among the gods of Athens
Acts 17:17:	Paul in the synagogue
Acts 17:17:	Paul in the market-place
Acts 17:18-20:	Paul invited to Mars Hill
Acts 17:22-31:	Paul's sermon on Mars Hill
Acts 17:32-34:	The people's wonderment
Acts 18:1:	Paul's departure

One Way to Begin:

Paul was alone in Athens. Timothy and Silas had not yet come. They were to meet him here. He wished that they would hurry, for the city of Athens was large and crowded and he knew no one. As he wandered about through the marketplace and busy streets, he noticed that everywhere there were idols: Zeus, the king of Olympus; Hera, the queen of heaven; Hermes, the herald of the gods; Heracles, the god of strength; and many, many others. In one place he stopped short with astonishment! Here was an altar without a statue, an altar with these words standing out upon it: "TO AN UNKNOWN GOD."

"My," thought Paul, "these people are very religious and want to pray to God, but they know nothing about Him."

A Possible Climax and Conclusion:

All had been still while Paul spoke, for many seemed to feel that here was a man who knew God personally. When, however, Paul said that God had raised Jesus from the dead, several broke the stillness with loud laughter and such a tumult arose that Paul could no longer be heard.

"He is just a babbler," shouted some.

"No, no, we want to hear him again!" cried others.

Still others kept silent, holding a great wonderment in their hearts.

But certain ones came to Paul and stayed with him until he had told them more, until they knew for themselves the God of Heaven and felt His living Spirit in their hearts. Among these were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris.

After these things, Paul departed from Athens and came to Corinth to preach the Word there.

WHAT CAN WE FIND OUT ABOUT GOD FROM THE STORY OF CREATION?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: Genesis 1:1-2:3.

Supplementary Materials: Nature poems and stories in public school texts and in nature and science magazines; nature articles in children's encyclopedias; familiar songs and hymns about God's world; actual wonders in God's world.

Possible Activities:

Discovering and discussing the details of the Creation story.

Finding pictures to illustrate each "day" of the creation story. (These might be collected and arranged for a class poster or for individual notebooks.)

Comparing the story of creation told by scientists with the Biblical account of the creation of the world (Charts of each, showing vividly the stages in the process, would lead the children to realize that God's revelation of Himself in stone and living things is different only in expression from that given through His Word. Have them find the three places in the account where it uses the word "create" or "created." Discuss the meaning of the word in its true sense. Have them list three things which were created out of nothing. What was added in each case? Matter 1:1; Animal Life 1:21; Living Soul 1:27; 2:7.

Illustrating the song, "All Things Bright and Beautiful," or some other nature song or poem, with pictures, pressed flowers, or blue prints.

Making a list of "mysteries" in God's world; e.g., How does a caterpillar change into a butterfly? How does an egg turn into a bird? How does a carrier pigeon find its way home? How can a tiny spider make such beautiful patterns in its web?

Writing a "thank you" song for God's good gifts.

Working on the main class project.

Talking about and learning the hymn, "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past," stanzas 2 and 3.

Answering the Question:

After a period of guided research and discussion, the children should be able to formulate and state the conceptions of God they have found in their study of the creation story. It would be well for the teacher to aid in the formulation of statements which will express the thinking of the group. These statements might be written on the board and in individual notebooks as answers to the class query. They should also be incorporated in concrete form in whatever project the class has chosen as its unifying activity.

Leading "from Wonder to Worship":

The teacher can easily lead the children into a period of real worship by commenting upon the wonders they have mentioned. A poem, such as "Whispering Things to God" by Elizabeth Mc E. Shields,* quiet music, or a nature hymn would bridge the gap between conversation and meditation. Even though the story of creation has been read by the children, it would be well for the teacher to tell it in her own words at this time, giving, through her own appreciation, something of its glow. As a climax to the whole worship experience, the children would probably like to participate in a few moments of prayer, either making short prayers of thanksgiving themselves or praying in their hearts under the teacher's guidance or leadership.

WHAT CAN WE FIND OUT ABOUT GOD FROM OUR EARLY BIBLE STORIES?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical materials: Genesis 2:4-3:24—The first disobedience; 4:1-15—The first murder; 6:5-9:17—God washes the world clean and gives it a new start.

Supplementary materials: Stories of people who, like Cain, hurt someone else because they lost their tempers and disobeyed God; stories of people who, like Noah, dared to stand alone for the right in order to obey God; current news-magazines and papers.

**Worship and Conduct Songs*

Possible Activities:

Discussing the causes for unhappiness in the world and God's efforts to keep the world as righteous and happy as He made it.

Listing those things which are happening in the world today because some people are obeying God and letting Him be Ruler in their lives; illustrating the same.

Listing those things which are happening in the world today because some people are disobeying God and not letting Him be Ruler in their lives; illustrating the same.

Drawing "Little Jet" pictures of these early Bible stories for individual notebooks.

Memorizing God's promise to Noah, Genesis 8:22.

Practicing hymn, "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past."

Answering the Question:

If the discussion has been wisely guided, the children should have a dawning conception of God as Ruler of the world and should have little difficulty in recording this answer in a vivid manner. (One group of children pictured this idea on a frieze, by drawing a map of the world with a crown and scepter above it. On one side of the world were pictures from magazines showing things which were happening because people were disobeying God. On the other side were pictures of things which were happening because people were obeying Him.)

Looking Inward in Worship:

A Story Suggestion:

GOD IS THE RULER YET

Steps in the Story:

Genesis 2:4-25: The perfect world
Genesis 3:1-8: The first disobedience
Genesis 3:9-24: God teaches obedience
Genesis 4:1-8: Cain kills Abel
Genesis 4:9-16: God corrects Cain
Genesis 6:1-6: The world becomes sick with sin
Genesis 6:8-21: God plans to save the one good family
Genesis 6:22-7:5: Noah obeys God
Genesis 7:6-19: The evil in the world is destroyed
Genesis 8:20-9:17: God starts again with Noah

Anyone telling this story will have to keep constantly in mind the sweep of the narrative, lest she become lost in detail.

A period of quiet meditation might well follow the story, meditation guided by such suggestions as:

Let us be quiet before God.

Let us let Him remind us of ways in which we are disobeying Him and thus bringing unhappiness to ourselves and to others.

Let us let Him remind us of things we must do if we would let Him be King of our hearts.

Let us ask His help in living as His children this week.

The worship might well close with that lovely junior hymn, "This is My Father's World," with special emphasis on the last two lines.

WHAT CAN WE FIND OUT ABOUT GOD FROM THE STORY OF ABRAHAM?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: Genesis 12:1-9—God calls Abraham; 13:1-18—Abraham acts like a friend of God; 17:1-8; 18:1-19:7; 19:10-29; 21:1-7—God proves His friendship; 22-1-19—Abraham stands a test; 24:1—Abraham is blessed in all things.

Supplementary Materials: Pictures showing the ziggurat and other excavations of Ur of the Chaldees or of Babylonia; pictures and stories of Bedouin life found in geography books; stories of nomadic peoples found in histories, readers, and travel books; stories of great friendships

Suggestions for Worship:

Make the atmosphere of worship as spontaneous and natural as possible in order to help the children feel that the God to whom they pray is truly a friendly God. The story, "Abram of Ur," may help the children to understand more fully God's call and the subsequent events in Abraham's life. It should be told, however, with the understanding that it is not a Bible story, but is one person's attempt to understand Abraham better by using what we have learned of life in Ur of the Chaldees as a result of archeological explorations, and combining it with what is known of the family and early life of Abraham in the Biblical account.

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story of "God, the Friend of Abraham."

Listing the three promises of God to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3)

Discussing ways in which God's friendship with Abraham is like our friendship with each other

Discussing ways in which God's friendship with Abraham is greater than our friendship with each other

Discussing ways in which God shows His friendship for us

Discussing what kind of a friend Abraham was to Lot

Discussing what kind of friends we will be to each other if God is our Friend, too

Illustrating the stories of Abraham in individual notebooks

Dramatizing favorite scenes from the life of Abraham
Reading or writing stories of great friendships
Reading or writing stories of modern "friends of God"
Making clay tablets like those used for writing in Ur
Making pottery and tents such as Abraham must have used
Talking about and memorizing John 15:14
Reviewing former sessions

Answering the Question:

The answer to this question will not even have to be sought after the stories of Abraham have been told, for "God is a Friend" is clearly the theme of both. The problem will be how best to record this answer for the class in permanent form. The shape the answer will take will, of course, depend upon the type of project the class has undertaken.

Story Suggestions:

ABRAM OF UR

(*An imaginary story re-creating the life of Abraham's day in Ur of the Chaldees*)

"May the wrath of the heart of my god be pacified!*
May the god who is unknown to me be pacified!
May the goddess who is unknown to me be pacified;
May the known and unknown god be pacified;
May the known and unknown goddess be pacified!
. . . . . .
May the god who is angry with me be pacified!
. . . . . ."

Abram, sitting on the steps of the great temple to the moon-god, listened to the chanting. As he listened he almost believed they were real, the god of the moon and the great goddess Anunit. As the prayer went on, he was glad they were not:

"The god in wrath of his heart, hath visited me,
The goddess hath become angry with me...
. . . . . .
I sought for help, but no one taketh my hand.
I wept, but no one came to my side.
I utter cries, but no one hearkens to me.
I am afflicted, I am overcome, I do not look up.
. . . . . .
I kiss the feet of my goddess and...
To known and unknown god, I make supplication.
. . . . . .
How long, known or unknown goddess, until thy unfriendly heart be pacified?"...

*Babylonian c. 2000 B.C., "Penitential Psalm to the Goddess Anunit" in Caroline Miles Hill's *The World's Great Religious Poetry.*

Abram could stand it no longer. All his life he had wanted to come to the temple at midnight to hear the prayers of the priests. His father had not let him worship at the temple, but had taught him to pray to the Creator of the world. He had sometimes thought that prayer to a god you could see would be more real. But now! He shuddered. Even the priests felt that the gods were unfriendly; even the priests did not know whether their gods heard or not. As Abram slipped off the steps and ran down the great stone walk, he looked up at the moon. Surely, if it were a god, it would do something about people as unhappy as the priests. But there it was, smiling the same old smile, a jeering smile it seemed to Abram. It made him uncomfortable.

He could hear the water flowing down the aqueduct and could see the fountain still playing as he ran by, but somehow these did not make him feel any less fearful. When he reached his house, he leaned against the sun-baked bricks of the wall for an instant. He must stop the loud beating of his heart before he entered. Although the door squeaked in its socket as he pushed it open, no one awoke as he crawled into bed beside his brothers, Nahor and Haran.

No one in the family knew that he had been out; for as soon as he hopped out of bed, there was Haran by his side. "I'll help you pour your bath water down the drain if you help me tie up this belt," Haran said. Abram helped him and, as he did so, began questioning him to discover whether or not his brother had been awake when he came in.

"Did you hear the priests last night?" Abram asked.

"No," said Haran. "All I heard was Father Terah's talking."

"I heard him, too," interrupted Nahor. "You know he talks constantly in his sleep. I think he is worried about you. He kept saying your name again and again and muttering something about this evil city of Ur. Its wickedness doesn't worry me. I'd rather live here than anywhere else on earth."

"Well, you needn't get so excited," said Abram. "Nobody has said anything about leaving. But you know, I don't think I would mind going away, if I could go where I could feel that God was with me always. He somehow seems so far away. I sometimes wonder if he knows me, the boy Abram, or cares what I do."

"Oh, you are always bothering about God," cried Nahor. "Come, if you don't get dressed any faster than that you will never be ready for lessons."

After breakfast, Abram, Nahor, and Haran sat down to their studies. First, they mixed clay which the servant had brought to them in a crock. Next, they molded a number of oblong clay tablets.

"Oh, Haran, you hold your stylus all wrong," said Abram as Haran began writing on one of the tablets with a sharp, pointed stick. "Look, this is the way. See? If you keep it steady, your letters are sharp and clear! There, the teacher will be pleased if you do that well."

Soon the teacher came and their lessons began in earnest.

"Abram, there, will make a good trader one of these days," remarked the teacher as he watched Abram add up figures and record their results in the clay. "But Nahor here! You think of nothing but how soon you will be through."

"Nahor thinks he is grown and doesn't need to learn any more," said Abram. "And we are almost grown! We are going to stop school next week. Did you know that both of us are to be married before the days grow short again? I am to marry Sarai, and Nahor is to marry Milcah. Our father has arranged it. You should see the bracelets and shawls and other beautiful things my father has bought as gifts for the brides!"

The next few weeks were busy ones for Abram and Nahor. Each must fix up his own room for his bride. Abram was making a new set of furniture out of fine wood and putting the pieces together with the best of brass nails. Nahor was molding pottery and secretly making an image of the great god, Bel, to put upon his shelf. "I am going to make his wife, Beltis, to go beside him," said Nahor. "I think Milcah will like to have them near. She is very religious. Even if they aren't real gods, they are comforting."

And so the wedding day came and passed and the household became a gay one, with Sarai and Milcah singing and laughing as they sewed and cooked and tended the garden. Later in the year Haran, too, was married. The three couples lived joyously together.

All during the day, Abram was happy; but at night, when the chanting of the priest reached his ears, he felt again and again that old longing to know God better.

"Sarai," he said one night, "I went to hear that chanting one time; it frightened me. The priests think the gods are very unfriendly to us and do not even listen when we pray. Do you think that can be true of the God of whom our father and his friends talk? Or do you think that maybe if one listened well and long he could hear the voice of God speaking to him in his heart, telling him of what his life is for and how to live it?"

"I can not say," said Sarai. "Such things are too wonderful for me. Have you ever talked with your father about it? He seems to be spending much time on the roof in meditation these days."

Abram bided his time. One day he came to Terah and said, "Father, do you talk with God? Is He friendly to us mortals or does

He hate us and plan evil for our days as the priests seem to think?"

"It is hard to talk to God in this evil city," answered his father. "But this I know. If we were to leave this great city full of images of deaf and heartless gods, this city full of evil deeds and ways, we might be able to come near to the 'Maker of the Universe' and to hear His voice as did our ancestors in the garden. Would you and Sarai have the courage to leave all the wealth and gladness, all the learning and industry of this great city, to sell your comforts here, and go with me to a new land, a land where we may have nothing better than tents to dwell in and where our business will be the difficult one of tending sheep instead of the easy one of selling fine things? Would you go with me, Abram? Mayhap, there, God would make Himself known to you as a Friend."

It wasn't long before Abram felt that God was calling him to go. And so it was that Terah, Abram, and Sarai moved to a new city which they called Haran after the boy Haran who had now died. Lot, Haran's son, lived with them and partly took his father's place.

After many years Terah died, being two hundred five years old. Abram buried him in Haran and upon him now fell the responsibilities of the family. It was no small task, for his father had become a rich man with many flocks and herds and servants.

Everyone looked to Abram and came to him for advice. These were happy days, though he began to wish that he had a son who could grow up here in this good land. He made a habit of going out under the trees in the evening of the day or out under the stars at night and there, where all of the world seemed whispering things in his ears, he listened for the voice of God.

One night it came to him. He could hear the words plainly in his soul, "Abram, get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and be thou a blessing: and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." That was all. But it had happened.

"God has spoken to *me*," thought Abram, in wonder. "He has a plan for *me* to carry out; He has work for *me* to do. He has a land for *me* to explore and inherit and a blessing to give to the world through *me*. God has truly spoken. He is surely my Friend."

And so it was that Abram left all the friends and relatives in Haran, all the wealth of lands that he owned there, and with his family started for a land that he knew not of. He left, knowing but one thing: knowing that God was his Friend and that this Friend needed and wanted him—Abram of Ur.

GOD THE FRIEND OF ABRAHAM

Steps in the Story:

Genesis 12:1-9: God and Abraham make a covenant
Genesis 13:1-8: Abraham acts like a friend of God
Genesis 17:1-8; 18:1-15: God encourages His friend
Genesis 18:15-19:29: God grants the request of His friend
Genesis 21:1-7: God keeps a promise
Genesis 22:1-19: Abraham stands the test
Genesis 24:1: God blesses Abraham in all things

WHAT CAN WE FIND OUT ABOUT GOD FROM THE STORY OF JACOB?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical materials: Genesis 27:1-45—Jacob, the cheat; Genesis 28:10-22—Jacob discovers that he is never alone; Genesis 29:1-30—Jacob meets another cheater; Genesis 31:3-32:2—Jacob sees that God is helping him; Genesis 32:3-21—Jacob is sorry; Genesis 32:22-32—Jacob is changed; Genesis 33:1-20—The new Jacob.

Supplementary materials: Stories of people whom God has changed, pictures of Jacob such as that of "Jacob Wrestling with the Angel" by Rembrandt.

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story of Jacob told by the teacher
Discovering and discussing those things in Jacob which God saw needed changing
Discovering and discussing the ways in which God helped Jacob
Talking about ways in which God helps people today
Finding pictures and stories of people whom God has changed
Picturing or writing the story of how God helped Jacob
Writing prayers for God's help to be used in class worship or for private devotions
Dramatizing favorite incidents from the life of Jacob
Working on class project

Drill:

Talking about and learning hymn, "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past," stanza 1.
Talking about and starting to learn Psalm 103:1-5.
Memorizing Genesis 28:15-16.

Answering the Question:

As the story of Jacob deals with rather intangible things, the formulating of an answer to the question, "What is God like?" might

prove to be a little more difficult than usual. The answer, "God is a Helper," implying His constant presence and His help in living, comes as near as any to embodying the several conceptions of God found in the story. The concrete method of recording the question will, of course, depend upon the chosen expressional activity. (One class of ten-year-olds pictured it on a scroll in the following manner: In the center of one scroll section, they wrote the words, "God is our Helper. He changes us." In parallel columns they pasted magazine pictures showing changes in people's attitudes and habits; e.g., the left-hand picture of a person losing her temper over a run in her stocking was paralleled on the right by a person remaining calm under a similar situation; a left-hand picture of two boys fighting was paralleled by a right-hand one of two playing peacefully together; the left-hand picture of a grumpy person was paralleled by a right-hand portrait of a cheerful one, etc.)

Worshipping the God of Jacob:

If the children have memorized Genesis 28:16b, it may be repeated in unison as a "call to worship." If it has not been memorized, it may be read by the group or spoken by the teacher. The group may, instead, prefer to read together Psalm 103:1-5 if this has been previously discussed. A story of a present-day experience similar to Jacob's or of some historical character such as St. Augustine would prepare the children for their own meditative heart-searching and silent prayer to God.

A Climax and Conclusion for the Story of Jacob:

Climax:

. . . The messengers, sent to tell Esau of Jacob's arrival, returned.

"We gave your message," they said. "He is on his way to meet you, now, with four hundred men."

"Four hundred men!" thought Jacob. "He must still be angry. He must still intend to kill me. I cannot meet him alone, with my flocks, and my herds, and my little children." And so, because he was frightened, he prayed to God that day, "Bless me, God. Deliver me from the hand of Esau, lest he kill me."

That night, after Jacob had sent his family across the River Jabbok, God came to him in the form of an angel. All night long, He struggled with him, for Jacob, the cheat, was not ready for God's blessing. He was not ready to inherit the promised land.

Jacob wanted the blessing but he did not want to be different, and so they struggled on.

As dawn came near, God said, "Let me go."

But now Jacob's mind was changed. Now limping and weak, he knew he needed God. And so he cried, "No, no, I will not let You go, not until You bless me."

"I cannot bless a Jacob, a cheat," answered God. "If you will let me change you from a cheat to a true friend of God, your name from Jacob, which means 'cheat,' to Israel, which means 'power with God,' I will bless you."

"I am willing," said Jacob. "Change me, change me!"

"I will do it," answered God. "Your name shall be no longer Jacob, but Israel, for you have struggled with God and have prevailed."

And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel for he said, "I have seen God face to face."

As the sun rose, he crossed over the river and as he went he limped upon his thigh. And thus Jacob rejoined his family; but it was not really Jacob, but Israel whom they saw.

Conclusion:

In order to show his brother, Esau, that he came in friendship rather than in hate, Israel sent gifts ahead . . . (Tell Genesis 32:13-20 dramatically as it must have happened, giving Esau's reactions to each drove of live-stock as it appeared led by a servant. Make effective the peacemaking scene between the estranged brothers by retelling 33:1-17.)

So the runaway settled in his father's country, no longer fearful of others, no longer hated by them. Although he lived to be an old, old man, we never hear of his cheating again. Something had happened that night at the River Jabbok.

Picture study: "Jacob Wrestling With the Angel"

Additional Story Suggestion:

WANG, THE TIGER

(A resume of a story based on incidents from the mission field. It should be enlivened and enriched by specific human incident, atmosphere, and direct discourse.)

Introduction:

Wang, the son of a wealthy Chinese farmer, was a constant anxiety to his father. Although his father gave him interesting home and farm duties, provided him with all the necessities of life, and taught him the virtues of Confucius, he was rebellious and self-seeking and, as he grew older, developed the habit of slipping out of the house at night to join a group of hoodlums in town.

Story Development:

His father, in order to keep him out of trouble, tried various methods of control, each, in turn, resulting in failure: his pleadings were forgotten; his scoldings were laughed away; bolted gates led to flights over the wall; broken glass cemented along the top of the wall stimulated violent outbreaks; ropes were torn from hands and

feet; and actual shackles from the jail proved to be only a temporary check.

Wang finally ran away to stay, and the father heard of him only through rumor: "Wang has joined a bandit tribe!" "Wang helped to sack a neighborhood village!" "Wang is leader of his band!" "Wang, Wang, Wang, Wang, the Tiger!"

Wang became the terror of the countryside.

Then, for a time, he was not heard of.

Climax:

One day, Wang's home community was amazed by notices of his death and an announcement of the date and place of his funeral. When the hour arrived, great crowds assembled on the slopes of the family burial ground; the funeral procession came with the usual laments of hired mourners; and the casket was placed ready for burial. Before the earth was lifted, however, Wang's father stepped forward and opened the casket, Wang himself stepped forth.

In the stillness that followed, Wang told his story, a story of his life among the bandits, of his meeting with a Christian and the desire to be different which followed, of his despair at the thought of ever controlling himself, and of the wonder that came to him when he found that Christ could do for him what walls and chains had failed to do.

"So you see, Wang, the Tiger, is truly dead. This is a new man in Christ you see before you," concluded Wang.

And the awestruck villagers did see.

Conclusion:

Wang went back to his father's house to take his place on the farm. Under his leadership and because of his influence, a church grew up in the village.

WHAT CAN WE FIND OUT ABOUT GOD FROM THE STORY OF JOSEPH?

Material for Children's Research:

Biblical materials: Genesis 37:1-36—Joseph sold into Egypt; 39:1-6—Joseph made overseer in the captain's house; 39:19-40:23—God helps Joseph even in prison; 41:1-57—Joseph made ruler of Egypt; 42:1-43:15—Joseph tests his brothers; 43:15-45:20—Joseph forgives his brothers; 45:21-46:7 and 50:15-26—Joseph saves his family; Romans 8:28

Supplementary materials: Stories of Lincoln or others who became great after overcoming many difficulties. Incidents in news-

papers or magazines which show that, in spite of evil plots and actions on the part of many, God still works out his purposes.

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story of Joseph told by the teacher (with emphasis on the fact that in each situation God's Spirit was with Joseph and Joseph obeyed.)

Discovering and listing the hard things in Joseph's life which turned out for good

Reading, remembering and talking about stories of modern "Josephs", people who have found that "all things" do "work together for good to them that love God." (Incidents of people who have learned through suffering or who, like Helen Keller, have been able to help others because they themselves have suffered, would bear fruit in discussion.)

Discovering and discussing ways in which Joseph let God be his Guide; (e.g., by not getting bitter and rebellious when everything seemed to go wrong; by not casting aside, even among strangers who might never know, his early knowledge of God's way of living; by not holding grudges; by letting God live in him and speak to him—see Genesis 39:3; 39:21; 40:8; 41:16; 41:37-39)

Picturing the story of Joseph for individual notebooks

Writing or dramatizing incidents from Joseph's life or from lives of modern "Josephs"

Memorizing Romans 8:28

Talking about and learning the last stanza of "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past"

Drill

Working on the class project

Answering the Question:

The idea of God as a Guide has, of course, grown throughout the discussion. Such a conception of God is not hard to illustrate. The shepherd Psalm and Bryant's "To a Waterfowl" give ideas for picturing God's guidance.

Worship Suggestions:

Selections from the verse, Psalm, and poem mentioned above, if used effectively, would enrich any period of worship centering in the thought of God as a Guide. "Saviour, like a Shepherd Lead Us," "Father, Lead Me Day by Day," or some similar hymn might be sung as a group prayer. "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past" would be a fitting climax.

WHAT CAN WE FIND OUT ABOUT GOD FROM THE STORY OF MOSES?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical materials: Exodus 1:1-22; 2:23-25—The Israelites in trouble but God not far off; 2:1-22; 3:1-4:17—God saves, teaches, and calls a leader; 4:27-31—The Israelites are glad God cares; 5:1-6:1—Hard things come to the Israelites; 6:2-9—God tries to comfort the people by promising to deliver them; Psalm 103:6-13

Supplementary materials: Pictures and stories of Egypt in the times of the Pharaohs found in geographies, histories, encyclopedias, Bible-story books, "National Geographic Magazines"; current news magazines, papers, and church journals

Suggestions for Worship:

A Call to Worship:*

"Sometimes when morning lights the sky
And gladness fills the air,
I feel like telling things to God;
He seems so very near."

A prayer: Thanking God for His nearness and loving care

*Elizabeth McE. Shields in *Worship and Conduct Songs.*

A Story:

JAMIN*

Although the Bible doesn't name them, we know they must have lived, the great-great-grandsons of Joseph. Let us make believe that one of them was called Jamin and try to imagine his life in Egypt.

"What!" exclaimed Jamin. "My people build cities? Never! They are shepherds."

"Well, they can't keep sheep any longer," said the Egyptian boy. "You can't work for yourselves any more. You have to work for Pharaoh."

"How can he make us work for him?" cried Jamin. "The other Pharaoh gave Joseph all the land of Goshen so that our people would not have to work in cities, but could tend the flocks in the fields. How can he take away this gift and make us his slaves?"

"Well, he has," said the Egyptian. "Just go home and see."

Jamin hurried home and found everything in a state of turmoil. Egyptian officers were stationed everywhere. His mother was out in the fields with the flocks, and his father was nowhere to be seen.

*Agnes P. Junkin. Reprinted by permission of The Presbyterian Committee of Publication, Richmond, Va.

Before he could get to his mother, an Egyptian called to him gruffly, "Hey, boy! Stop wasting time. Several miles down the road you will find some men making brick. Take you some buckets and carry them water from the river."

Jamin looked at the huge man with his ugly whip, picked up his mother's buckets, and hurried off. When he reached the brickmakers he stopped in amazement. Why these were his neighbors! There was old Reuben, bent with age, carrying great baskets of earth. There was Amram, the most respected man of the tribe of Levi, mixing straw with clay. And there was his father . . .! Jamin dashed up to him to ask the meaning of it all.

"We will talk about it later, son. You must get to work now."

So Jamin joined the other boys of his age and began carrying water from the river.

From this time on life was very different for Jamin. His home was not the delightful place it had been, for his mother, with all the work of the fields on her hands, had no time for jollity and stories, and he and his father were exhausted by evening. Every morning they arose and went to their brickmaking. Every day their taskmasters became more and more severe, leaping upon them with whips if they paused to rest. Thousands of Israelites were thus driven to build cities for the king.

At first Jamin thought that surely this hard work could not go on for long. Surely the king would see that his people were not cut out to build cities. Surely he would recognize his mistake and allow them to return to the old way of living. But Jamin was wrong. The weeks lengthened into months and the months into years, and every day Jamin and his father had to rise early and set out to work all day long for the Egyptians. As Jamin grew older he had harder work to do. There were younger boys to take his place now—boys who had been babies when this terrible life had begun. And so the years went by and the situation became worse and worse. Jamin grew to be an old man, and he was still going to work every day and working just as hard as he had on that first day years ago.

Then one evening Jamin came home to find all the women in tears. "Why, what has happened now?" he cried.

"Pharaoh is going to kill all the little boy babies as soon as they are born," said old Puah. "He is bent on our destruction!"

There was little rest that night in Goshen. Many were weeping in distress. Others were praying to God for help, asking Him to send them a deliverer. Jamin sat on his own doorstep and looked out into the night. Had God forgotten His people? Did He really care what happened to them? As Jamin thought these thoughts he looked up

into the sky at the thousands of stars shining there. He remembered from years and years ago, from before the time this terrible bondage had come upon them, how his mother had told him stories of their ancestors. He remembered the story of Abraham and how God had talked to him under the stars. God had told Abraham that He would make His nation as great as they. "The stars are still shining," thought Jamin. "Surely God's promise will still hold. Surely God will hear the prayers of His people."

A Hymn: Our God, Our Help in Ages Past

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story of the early life of Moses
Discovering and listing the hard experiences which made the Israelites think that God did not care
Finding incidents in the story which show that God did care
Listing hard things which come to people today which make them think that God does not care
Finding proof that God does care for us today
Dramatizing, writing, or picturing favorite stories from the early life of Moses
Working on individual and class projects
Studying and memorizing Psalm 103:6-13, with especial emphasis on verse 13

Answering the Question:

If the group stops to list the things which Moses learned about God through his own experiences, they will have a splendid basis for forming their own conceptions of God. Although several answers might be given, "God is a Father" probably comes nearest to embodying the major ideas. This answer can easily be put into concrete form in the class project. This might be done by listing or picturing things which a father does for a son which were done in an even greater manner for Moses by God.

Hints for the Telling of the Story of Moses:

Summarizing Paragraphs:

. . . Moses had learned many things: he had learned about lawmaking and government in the palace school; he had learned about building and painting from the Egyptian workmen; his mother had taught him the stories of God; his own hot temper had shown him that killing and fighting would never save his people, that he wasn't strong enough to do it; his life as a shepherd had taught him how to control himself, how to take care of others, how to find water and food in a wilderness. He was now ready to be the leader of his people. But he did not know it. He did not know that God had been teaching him all along as a father teaches a son.

. . . God had heard the people's prayers, had seen the people's suffering, and knew how hard things were for them. In order to help them, He had saved Moses from drowning and had given him more training than any other man in the country. God had allowed the people to go on working in Egypt until they had grown from a group of seventy to a nation of over six hundred thousand, a nation strong enough to go in and take a new land. God had a plan for showing the Egyptians and Pharaoh that He was a loving and powerful Father to His people. But the people did not see this. They only saw their troubles getting worse.

A Conclusion:

Exodus 6:2-8 re-told.

WHAT CAN WE FIND OUT ABOUT GOD FROM THE STORY OF THE ISRAELITES' FLIGHT FROM EGYPT?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: Exodus 7:1-12:36—God shows His power and convinces Pharaoh that he should let the people of Israel go; 12:37-13:22—God leads the Israelites out of Egypt; 14:1-15:2—The final victory; Psalm 103:13-18

Supplementary Materials: Map of Egypt, the Sinai peninsula, and Palestine; pictures of Egypt, the Red Sea, and the wilderness

Possible Activities:

Review and drill
Finding Egypt, the Red Sea, Palestine on the map
Listening to the story of the Israelites' flight from Egypt
Discovering and discussing ways in which God showed His power in this story
Discovering and discussing ways in which God is showing His power today
Understanding and memorizing Psalm 103:13-18
Picturing the story
Writing a Psalm of praise similar to Miriam's
Discussing the meaning of the Passover by use of chart such as suggested on p. 31 and by a story similar to the story-sermon found on page 69

Answering the Question:

Since this story shows God as a Saviour or Deliverer in the realm of human and physical forces, it can be pictured by the children in terms of human help in the midst of disaster; e.g., Sword's "Lost Sheep," a life saver rescuing a drowning man.

Telling the Bible Story:

Using the references suggested above, the teacher may tell the story of God's deliverance of the children of Israel.

Worship Suggestions:

Psalm 103, Psalms the children may have written, songs of praise, and the story below can be woven into an effective climax to this study.

THE PASSOVER FEAST*

In two weeks they were to leave Caesarea and go to Tarsus to live! Mary lay up on the flat roof of her house and looked out over the blue water. She didn't want to go. She was afraid to make the trip. What if the waves took their sailing ship out of its course and dashed them upon the rocks of some island? What if the ship turned over and she and her family were left floating on planks in the water? "It is so lonely on the sea," she thought. "I'm afraid to make the trip."

* * *

"Oh, Mary!" It was her mother calling her to come and help put the finishing touches on the Passover meal. Mary jumped up from her dreaming and ran downstairs.

"The boys have cleaned the whole house," said her mother. "Father has burned the leavened bread. Come, we must set the table for our feast."

"Why have you put so many different things on that one plate?" asked Mary. "I don't remember that we had that much last year."

"Yes, we had just these things last time. We always have the same things. We always have the lamb to remind us of the lamb our people killed when the angel of death passed over them in Egypt. The egg is our holiday sacrifice. The horseradish reminds us of the bitterness our people suffered in slavery. That cake of ground apples, almonds, and raisins, mixed with wine, reminds us of the bricks our forefathers were required to make. On that other plate you see the unleavened bread wrapped in a napkin."

"I know why we have that," said Mary. "Our forefathers didn't have time to put leaven in their dough so just ate it as it was and carried the dough with them on their journey. My, but that was an exciting night! If it hadn't been for God's help they couldn't have gotten away, could they? Just think of going on a trip with God, with a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day! It must have been wonderful to know that God was with them every minute."

*Agnes P. Junkin—Published by permission of the Presbyterian Committees of Publication.

That evening all the family gathered for the Passover feast. Mary's father pronounced grace. Then in a stately manner he lifted his glass and drank the wine. All the other members drank theirs in the same way. "This wine stands for the blood of the lamb," thought Mary, "a symbol of salvation from death. My, how loving God has been to his people!"

After a number of other ceremonies, her father lifted the plate of unleavened cakes and all the family repeated together:

"This is the bread of poverty and affliction which our fathers did eat in Egypt. Whosoever hungers, let him come and eat. Whosoever needs, let him come and eat of the Paschal lamb . . . This year we are servants; the next, if God wills, we shall be as free men."

Soon came the time for little David to ask his questions.

"Wherefore is this night distinguished from other nights?" he asked.

In answer, the father told the exciting story of how God had sent plagues upon the Egyptians until they let the Israelites go; how the angel of death passed over the houses upon whose doorposts was the sign of blood; how the people left in haste and were led by God's presence in fire and cloud.

Before they closed the meal they sang their favorite songs. Mary chose that one which ended with the words, "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."

After the meal she ran up to the roof again. The moon was up now and left a stretch of silver across the waves. "I was silly to be afraid," she said to herself. "If God guided our forefathers with fire and cloud, of course He will guide and care for us. It won't be a bit lonely on the sea. God will be there with us."

WHAT CAN WE FIND OUT ABOUT GOD FROM THE STORY OF THE WILDERNESS WANDERINGS?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: Exodus 15:22-26—God shows Moses how to make bitter water sweet; 16:1-36—God provides bread and meat; 17:1-7—God quenches the people's thirst; Psalm 103:19-22

Supplementary Materials: Stories of our first Thanksgiving found in histories and readers; hymn books and books of Thanksgiving poems; magazines from which can be cut pictures of God's gifts; Presidential Thanksgiving proclamations

Possible Activities:

Review and Drill
Listening to the story of the wilderness wanderings told by teacher
Listing things for which the Israelites should have been thankful
Discovering times when they were grumbling and ungrateful
Listing things for which we should be thankful
Talking about times when we are ungrateful
Talking about and learning the song, "Come Ye Thankful People Come"
Talking about and learning Psalm 103:19-22
Discussing our reasons for having a national Thanksgiving
Writing a Thanksgiving proclamation for the class, basing it on former Presidential proclamations
Collecting Thanksgiving poems

Answering the Question:

"God as Provider" is interesting and simple to work out in almost any project whether it be pictorial or dramatic.

Worship:

Any familiar Thanksgiving songs, poems, or stories may be used with Psalm 103 to feel and express their thanks to God. The story of Johnny Appleseed as told by Hulda Niebuhr in *Greatness Passing By* under the title "Blessed Are . . ." could be adapted for effective use.

WHAT HAVE WE FOUND OUT ABOUT GOD FROM THE STORIES WE HAVE ALREADY STUDIED?

Materials for Use in This Class Session:

Biblical Materials: Old Testament stories from Genesis and Exodus; Psalm 103:1-22; Psalm 136:1-26

Supplementary Materials: Picture of "Pilgrims on the Way to Church"; songs and poems of Thanksgiving; the President's Thanksgiving proclamation of the current year if it has been published

Possible Activities:

Reading and talking about the President's Thanksgiving proclamation
Reading and discussing Thanksgiving proclamations written by members of the class
Making Thanksgiving posters
Singing Thanksgiving songs
Continuing to learn Psalm 103 and "Come Ye Thankful People Come"
Remembering the stories told during the course of this unit and the discoveries made in each about God

Talking again about what it means to us that God is Creator, Ruler, Friend, Helper, Guide, etc.

Writing a psalm of thanks for what God does for us (Psalm 136 forms a good starting point. With a skeleton like the following on the board, the task will not be difficult. The psalm should bring home in a fresh manner the central thought of each story studied so far.)

A PSALM OF THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S GOODNESS

O give thanks unto the Lord;
For He has made.....
For His lovingkindness endureth forever.
O give thanks unto the Lord;
For, because He rules, we have.....
For His lovingkindness endureth forever.
O give thanks unto the Lord;
For, as my Friend, He.....
For His lovingkindness endureth forever.
O give thanks unto the Lord;
For, as my Helper, He.....
For His lovingkindness endureth forever.
O give thanks unto the Lord;
For, as my Guide, He.....
For His lovingkindness endureth forever.
O give thanks unto the Lord;
For, by His power, He.....
For His lovingkindness endureth forever.
O give thanks unto the Lord;
For, like a Father, He.....
For His lovingkindness endureth forever.
O give thanks unto the Lord;
For He has given me.....
For His lovingkindness endureth forever.

Suggestions for Worship:

Thinking meditatively about what each person in the picture, "Pilgrims Going to Church," had to thank God for
Using the "Psalm of Thanksgiving for God's Goodness" as a call to prayer
Thinking meditatively about what each one of us has to be thankful for
Expressing thanks in silent prayer or by sentence prayers
Listening to the story of the First Thanksgiving
Repeating a psalm of praise, Psalm 103
Singing a song of praise, "Come Ye Thankful People Come"

WHAT CAN WE FIND OUT ABOUT GOD FROM THE STORIES OF JESUS' COMING TO EARTH?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials:

Session 1—John 3:16; Matthew 1:18-25 with special emphasis upon verses 21 and 23; Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-7; I John 4:8

Session 2—Isaiah 9:6; Luke 2:8-20; Matthew 2:1-12

Session 3—John 14:8-9

Supplementary Materials: Christmas pictures, stories, poems and songs; pictures showing the different types of work Jesus did while on earth: healing the sick, helping the poor, loving little children, teaching the multitudes, forgiving the sinner, etc.

Answering the Question:

After listening to and reading the Christmas stories the children should be able, under the direction of the teacher, to add several new conceptions to their study of what God is like. In the first study, the central thought is, of course, "God is love;" in the second study is the thought that God is the father of all the peoples of the earth; the third study brings the class face to face with the thought that God is like Jesus.

Possible Activities:

Expressing new answers to the class question, "What is God Like?" through the chosen class project

Singing Christmas songs

Memorizing Christmas verses or parts of the Christmas story

Drawing the Christmas pictures

Making Christmas cards expressing the Christmas Spirit

Session I—GOD WHO LOVED AND GAVE

Story Suggestions:

GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD*

In the beginning, God made the great world in which we live. He spoke, and the sun and the moon, the starry sky, oceans, and rivers were created . . .

Then God made the green grass, tall trees, flowers of every color, fruit and grain to come upon the earth . . .

Then God created animals—great sea monsters, land beasts, fish to swim in the waters, and birds small and great to fly in the air . . . Only one thing was lacking: there was no one in all the earth to enjoy ts beauty, to use and appreciate its good things, and, most of all, to have fellowship with God.

*Dorothy Walker in Emily J. Werner's *What Difference Does It Make?*

Then God made man and woman to live in the midst of all the loveliness that He had provided. They were different from any of the other things in the world, for God had made them after His own likeness. He gave them minds with which to think and choose, hearts with which to love and appreciate, and souls with which to worship and reach up to God . . .

Every day was full of gladness. As man and woman lived in the great world garden and wondered at its splendor, they thanked God and knew that He was very near to them. When they gave names to all the countless things that God had created, and when they used the minds God had given them to take care of the garden and make it keep its fresh loveliness, they felt that they were working with God in the growing world. Often they talked with Him as friends and walked in the garden, sure that He was beside them. And as they worked together, the world was like a song and all of life was music.

Then suddenly the music was stopped. Man and woman broke their perfect friendship with God. He had given them minds to know and wills to choose good from evil, and they chose evil. Because they knew that God was holy and would not look upon sin, man and woman hid from God, and the glory of their first life in the world garden faded away. They could no longer talk and work with Him as friends in the old way and so, although the world was as full of color and beauty as before, to them it lost its magic. They had separated themselves from God. But God made a promise. He said that some day one would come to overcome the Evil One.

So the years went by. And as they passed, the evil in the world increased. Instead of choosing to do good, instead of choosing to obey the will of God, some men and women deliberately chose to go their own way. Others wanted to do His will, but often they forgot or were not strong enough to do the right. And always their sin came between them and God until they were sorry and sought His forgiveness with offerings and prayers for although man and woman were shut away from God by their sin, God loved them and gave them this way back to Him. Besides this He sent great men to teach them and to help them to remember to keep His laws. Always these leaders sent from God told the people that one day Some One would come who could show them how to live in the world without sin—Some One who could lead them back to the old friendship that they had had with God in the beginning, Some One who was Himself the Son of God.

At last came the time for this One to appear. While Bethlehem village was sleeping, glory flooded the hillside where shepherds kept

their flocks, angels filled the still air with their music, and far away through the pathless desert a radiant star appeared to three Wise Men, to guide them to Jesus. But the village of Bethlehem slept. Only a few shepherds knelt at Jesus' feet, for people did not know that on that wonderful night God was keeping His promise. The Child in the manger was the Leader who was to take away sin and bring back close companionship between God and his people.

All through the years that Jesus was on earth, most people did not know that He was the One for whom they had been waiting. As He went about the villages telling people about God, telling people that He was the Son of God, only a few people believed. Even when He gave His own life and died on the cross that His death might be the offering which would take away the sin that had stood for so many years between God and man, most people did not understand. But some men and women did believe in Him. After He had risen and ascended and sent His Spirit into their hearts, they knew that Jesus was working in them, making them strong and brave enough to do God's will. And they went about telling others that God had not sent Jesus into the world to condemn, but that He "so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

* * *

"The Jar of Rosemary" in Berg's *Primary Worship Programs.*

Picture Study: "The Sistine Madonna," Raphael—"God's Christmas Gift To the World." (Brown Robertson Co.)

Guiding Discussion and Worship:

If the worship service is held at the opening of the class sessions with the story, "God So Loved The World," as its heart, a thoughtful, reverent discussion of the deep and saving love of God will not be hard to steer. The children will tie up the love expressed in the coming of Christ with the love which had been trying to express itself through the years, covered in the stories they have studied.

A blackboard chart, drawn as the class discusses evidence of God's love as shown in His gradually revealed plan for man's redemption, (Genesis 3:15; 4:4; 12:1-3; Exodus 12:3, 7, 13) may help the children understand more clearly God's patient workings.

If there is time, "The Jar of Rosemary" might be told to suggest that in our human love for one another we show forth again the love of God.

Session II—GOD WHO GAVE TO ALL ALIKE

Story Suggestions:

The story of the shepherds and the wise men with emphasis upon the angels' song of peace and good will among men and the fact that the wise men came from foreign lands.

The story, "How the Artist Forgot Four Colors," by Margaret T. Applegarth in *Merry-Go-Round.*

Guiding Discussion and Worship:

Tom Curr's picture of Jesus and the children of the world or some other picture of Jesus with children of many nationalities might serve as a starting point for this session's discussion. The childen might guess from which country each child comes and then try to decide what it is that Jesus especially loves about each one.

The children may like to copy for their notebooks, for later use in the worship service or at home, this little prayer of Amelia Josephine Burr's:

"Our Father, you have given me
So much of love and joy today,
That I am thinking joy and love
To other children far away.
Wherever they lie down to sleep,
Happy and tired with work and play,
Yellow and brown and black and white,
Our Father, bless us all tonight!"*

* * *

The teacher may next bring up a question which will start real thinking on the part of the children. "The children Jesus really blessed were children of Palestine. What made the artist think that Jesus loves other children, too?" For actual proof that people from other nations did come to Jesus during His lifetime, the children might read Matthew 2:1-12; John 12:20, 21; Mark 7:25-30. In order to lead the children to see that the intention of God was that all should be affected by His coming, the teacher should then direct them to Luke 2:10.

The worship might be centered around the suggested story or some other story, the picture of Jesus and world children, a picture of the angels singing their song of good will, or a picture of the kings of the nations worshipping Christ.

*Mrs. Henry Peabody, *Children's Prayers,* used by permission of the publisher. (The Pilgrim Press, Boston.)

Session III—GOD'S LOVE AS SEEN IN JESUS' LOVE

Story Suggestions:

Incident telling of Philip's questionings concerning God and Jesus' answer, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Brief selected incidents from Jesus' life which show how He reveals the character of God. (The incidents should be climaxed by the story of Jesus' gift of Himself.)

Guiding Discussion and Worship:

The discussion for this session could well be focused on the composition of a story by the class as a whole in which Philip is the central character and Christ's revelation of God the theme. The teacher might lead the class to imagine Philip in the years after Christ's ascension.

For example, the teacher could say, "A crippled girl came to Philip and said, 'I might as well give up. Nobody cares about me, not even God.'"

And the class could give Philip's answer which, of course, would be, "Oh, but He does care. I know, because I saw Jesus helping crippled people; and God is like Jesus."

And the teacher could continue, "While walking by the sea one day, Philip chanced to see a poor fisherman struggling hard with his net which was broken and torn. 'I don't see much use in working anyway,' said the fisherman. 'I sometimes wonder if there is any use in it all. Whether I work well or badly doesn't really matter.'"

And the class could give Philip's answer, which might be, "Oh, but it does matter. When Jesus chose His helpers, He chose fishermen. It was fishermen whom Jesus used to start His church. Fishermen are important. Jesus loved them; and God is like Jesus."

And the teacher might go on, "A friend came to Philip one day. 'Philip, I can't sleep; I can't think; I have lied and cheated and done many wrong things and now I hate myself. My friends don't trust me any more and I know God can't love me. What shall I do?'"

And the children could give Philip's answer, "Oh, but Jesus forgave the thief on the cross who was a real criminal. He told the thief that he would be in heaven with Him. And Jesus was speaking for God."

Talking of how Christmas day is the birthday of the One who showed us so much about God and gave Himself that we might live with God. Talking of what we do when our friends have birthdays. Talking of how we can make this a happy birthday for Him.

Story:

BIRTHDAY GIFTS*

by Florence Crannell Means

As soon as they sat down to the Sunday dinner that December day, Rosemary and David began to tell mother and daddy about the plans for Christmas. They were to take part in a church-school pageant, and Tlizzie, Tlannie, and Tlitchieba and the others would be Indian shepherds with real sheep. For you see Rosemary and David lived in a little town where there were no other white children, but only Navajo Indians.

"I'm glad Christmas is coming so soon!" said Rosemary. "I do hope I'll get one of those baby dolls that have soft arms and hands —rubber, I guess."

"Oh, I know what I want, another tinker toy set!" cried David, passing his plate for more chicken and mashed potatoes.

"Mother, can we have a turkey this year?"

"Mother, don't you suppose we can borrow the Jones' ice-cream freezer so we can have some ice-cream?"

"Don't you think I can have an electric train this year?" asked David, his mouth full of chicken.

"Well, if he gets an electric train, I ought to have a toy electric stove," said Rosemary.

"I suppose we'll have new coats. We've worn ours two years."

So far they had not given father and mother a chance to shove in a word edgewise, but now they waited for the grown people to answer.

"Mother," said daddy, "doesn't Rosemary's birthday come in January? And David's in March?"

"You know they do, daddy."

"Well, I hope you remembered how badly I need a fountain pen," said daddy. "But if you did not get it for Christmas, you might give it to me on Rosemary's birthday. And I wouldn't mind having a new encyclopedia for David's birthday," he added thoughtfully.

Mother, who looked queer for a moment, nodded and smiled. "I'll remember," she said. "And for myself I'd like a new aluminum roaster for Rosemary's birthday. And a spring hat for David's."

She stopped with a laugh, for the children were staring wide-eyed.

"Why, they're our birthdays," said Rosemary. "You don't get yourselves presents for another person's birthday!"

"Or ask for them, either," grumbled David.

*Source unknown.

"Don't you?" daddy asked quietly. "I thought I heard you speaking for—oh, let's see: baby dolls and tinker toys and electric trains and—"

"But, daddy! that was for Christmas."

"And what is Christmas?"

The children looked soberly at each other.

"Well, of course," said David. "Of course we know it's Jesus' birthday. But you don't mean—"

"You don't mean we ought not to have presents for ourselves?" asked Rosemary.

"No, I don't mean that," daddy comforted them. "But I do mean we ought not to want all the gifts for ourselves and our family and forget about gifts for the One whose birthday it is."

"We put money in the Christmas collection," Rosemary said, brightening. "I don't see what other way we could give to him."

"Go get your Bible, daughter. Read Matthew 25:40."

Rosemary read: "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me."

"I don't see what that has to do with presents," said David.

"Well, just think about it for awhile," daddy suggested, "While we help mother with these dishes."

When the dishes were done the children put on their warm coats and their mittens and their woolly caps, for daddy had promised to take them for a ride. As soon as they were all settled, daddy turned the car up the mesa, or table mountain.

The little car climbed and climbed the twisty road till it reached the top of the mesa. Soon they came to one of the earth-covered houses where the Navajos live. Daddy stopped the car.

"Let's make a call," he said.

At the blanket-door they stopped and said, "How do you do?" and bent their heads and went in. A fire was burning on the dirt floor, and the mother and father and sister sat around it on sheepskins. There was no furniture. There were no pictures. There were no windows. There were no toys. The callers sat down on their heels for a few minutes and admired the baby. They could not talk Navajo, and the Navajos could not talk English, so they all smiled and nodded to show that they were friendly.

"Good-by," they said at last and went out.

Around the hogan came running a boy and girl about as large as David and Rosemary. They were taking turns pulling a toy car. It was a rusty car, and it had only three wheels.

They wore no hats, and their ears and noses were red with cold. The little girl's brown velveteen blouse was fastened with silver buttons, but it didn't look very warm. Her long, full, yellow skirt came down to her ankles, but the ankles were bare and chapped. The little boy's overalls were ragged and his shirt so full of holes that a greal deal of the little boy showed through. They shivered in the cold wind.

"Daddy," said Rosemary, as the car chugged down the hill, "if I could have just one doll—maybe we could get some toys for those little Indians."

"I won't mind if I don't get anything but the tinker toy," said David, "and then there'd be enough to buy warmer clothes for that boy."

"Do you suppose that's what the verse meant?" he asked suddenly.

Daddy nodded. "We might say it this way, 'Whenever you give a present to someone who needs it, you are giving it to Jesus."

Rosemary sighed happily. "Birthday presents for Jesus," she whispered.

UNIT II
WHAT DOES GOD EXPECT OF ME?
(A Study of the Ten Commandments)

OBJECTIVES:

To lead children to a thorough knowledge of the fundamental laws for conduct which God has given man, and to a growing understanding of their deeper implications for everyday attitudes and actions

To lead them to desire to be holy as He is holy, and to realize that no man can live up to these high standards except in union with Christ

To lead them to make these ten commandments the center of their personal "codes of conduct" and to practice their obedience

QUESTIONS WHICH WILL HELP THE CHILDREN ANSWER THE QUESTION, WHAT DOES GOD EXPECT OF ME?

What does the first commandment mean? How can I keep it? (Similar questions about each commandment, with a session devoted to each answer)

What key to the keeping of the commandments did Jesus give?

POSSIBLE UNIFYING ACTIVITIES:

Making individual notebooks, showing what the keeping of each commandment would mean to them

Making a "moving picture," showing the results of keeping and breaking commandments

Making models, showing the manner in which the commandments were kept before the minds of the Hebrews: tables of stone, scroll, mezuzah, phylacteries

Dramatizing the keeping of the commandments

Making a large class book (shaped like tablet of stone): The Ten Commandments in Life

Writing commandments in children's own words

Illustrating each commandment for modern life

Listing ways in which each commandment may be kept or broken

Listing modern laws which come from the ten commandments

THEME HYMN FOR UNIT:

Father, Lead Me Day by Day

UNIT MEMORY WORK:

Exodus 20:1-17

INTRODUCTORY SESSION: LAUNCHING THE UNIT AS A WHOLE

Some Launching Questions:

What would happen if we had no laws to live by and everybody did as he pleased?

What would happen on the highways if we had no traffic laws?

What would happen to a man who decided that traffic laws didn't matter, that no one had a right to tell him what to do, that he could drive on the left side of the street if he wanted to?

Why do we have laws, anyway?

If you had just come to the United States, how important would it be for you to find out what was expected of you on the highways?

If you had just come to the United States, how important would it be for you to find out what was expected of you as a citizen of our country?

We are all living in God's world. How important is it that we find out how He expects us to live here?

Shall we try to find out what God expects of us? Where shall we go for information?

Doing Some Research:

After the ten commandments have been suggested as a source for information concerning God's laws, the children might turn to Exodus 20, read the commandments together, and record on the board the central thought of each as it answers the class question. The general summary would be very brief, something like the following:

What does God expect of Me?

*Commandments	I and II—Worship of the one true God
Commandment	III—Reverence for His Name
Commandment	IV—Remembrance of His Day
Commandment	V—Respect for parents
Commandment	VI—Respect for life
Commandment	VII—Respect for marriage
Commandment	VIII—Respect for the property of others
Commandment	IX—Respect for truth
Commandment	X—Contentment

Vivifying Class Findings:

To make vivid the significance of the commandments in life, the class might imagine them as sign-boards on a life-roadway. A very crooked road with empty sign-boards at each curve may be drawn on the board and in individual notebooks.

*The numbering of these commandments is slightly different in different churches. This is the numbering used by the majority of the denominations. The children might compare the two systems of numbering.

The class might next write the commandments in briefly worded statements on each sign; e.g., "Worship God", "Obey parents", "Do not steal", "Keep marriage in honor".

Purposing and Planning:

The children will have questions about a number of the commandments. Rather than answering all of them, the teacher might write the questions on the board with the understanding that the group will seek for the answers during the coming weeks, answers to these minor questions which will help answer the central query, "What Does God Expect of Me?"

Some method for recording the answers as they are formulated will next have to be worked out. All class suggestions should be considered and weighed and a vote taken. When the main planning is done, committees will have to be chosen and definite responsibilities undertaken.

Worshipping:

If the story of the giving of the ten commandments is told effectively in the worship service, it will lift the whole session from the realm of the purely human into the realm of the divine. The class will be able to read the commandments together with the reverence which comes from the feeling that they are reading not a man-made code of ethics but the very utterances of God. The theme song, "Father Lead Me Day by Day", sung as a closing prayer, will personalize the whole experience.

THE GIVING OF THE LAW

The camp of the Israelites was full of bustle and commotion. Everyone was washing clothes, cleaning up tents, and burning trash. For days this had been going on, ever since Moses had come down from the mountain with the news that God himself was going to speak to them. God Himself was coming close to their camp! They were to hear His voice from the top of the mountain, their own mountain of Sinai! No wonder there was a bustle. No wonder all were astir.

On the morning of the third day, all was in readiness. Not only were tents, and grounds, and clothes spotless, but every person in the camp was scrubbed and clean. Not only had they purified their bodies; they had tried to take all unclean thoughts from their hearts and minds. Was not God coming to them? Were they not to hear His voice?

And so they stood, the morning of that third day, stood expectantly at the doors of their tents. And as the sun rose, a wonderful thing happened. Thunder began to roll! Lightning began to flash! A thick cloud appeared in the sky and settled on the mountain. And from somewhere there was heard the voice of a trumpet, ex-

ceeding loud; so loud that all in the camp trembled. And Mount Sinai, the whole of it, smoked, because God had descended upon it in fire; and the smoke went up like the smoke of a furnace; and the whole mountain quaked greatly. The voice of the trumpet became louder and louder! The people came close to the foot of the mountain. Then God spoke.

God spoke, and His voice was like no other voice the people had ever heard. And the words were these:

"I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Thy God in vain.

"Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.

"Honor thy father and thy mother.

"Thou shalt not kill.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery.

"Thou shalt not steal.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

"Thou shalt not covet."

And then the voice ceased and the people saw only the lightnings and smokings and heard only the voice of the trumpet and the noise of the thunderings. Then the people were afraid and said to Moses, "Do not let God speak to us again. We are not good enough to look upon Him. We are not great enough to hear him. From now on you talk to Him and tell us what He says."

But Moses answered, "Why, don't be afraid. God has come to you and spoken to you, that you might know Him, and sin not."

But the people said, "No, you speak to Him." So Moses went again to God on the mountain and God wrote the laws upon two tables of stone.

Possible Activities:

The writing of the commandments from the positive rather than the negative standpoint, "Thou shalt" instead of "Thou shalt not"; e.g., "Worship the Lord, thy God," "Be honest," "Preserve life" . . .

Choosing a committee to go to see some lawyer to learn how many of the commandments are a part of the law of the United States; what main laws come from each

Writing "Ten Commandments for the Home," "Ten Commandments for School," "Ten Commandments for the Playground," etc.

Working on the chosen class subject

Learning the theme song, "Father Lead Me Day by Day", and the ten commandments

WHAT DO THE COMMANDMENTS MEAN? HOW CAN I KEEP THEM?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: Exodus 20:1-17; Leviticus 19:1-4, 9-17; Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Supplementary Materials: Stories in secular literature and history showing how the keeping of the laws of God has brought happiness and how their neglect has brought grief (Children's readers and histories are full of stories of this kind.) Books of poems, songs, prayers, and hymns related to the problems considered in the ten commandments; old magazines for illustrative pictures; pictures of Mt. Sinai, the story of the giving of the law, the ten commandments; pictures of tablets of clay, etc., used by ancient peoples for writing purposes

Suggestions for Procedure:

Any group could profitably spend a class session on each of these commandments. It might be well, however, to group commandments I and II because of their similarity, VI and VII because of the fact that commandment seven is really a commandment for adults rather than children and requires no more than a brief explanation here, and VIII and IX because of the fact that honesty in word and deed can easily be considered together.

Drill:

It would be well for the group to practice saying the commandments together and to test themselves in various ways to discover what progress they are making in memorizing the set. This process need not be a burden to the children. If the commandments are simply repeated together every class period while they are under consideration, the children will practically know them when the unit is completed. Testing can be approached in the game spirit and truly enjoyed. One such game is as follows: The children line up against the wall and repeat the commandments, in order, one by one, each child reciting the commandment which falls to his lot. Any one who makes a mistake takes his place at the foot of the line. The object of the game is to see which children, by the end of the game period, have not had to forfeit their positions in the line.

The worship for these sessions should be sometimes formal and sometimes informal; sometimes at the opening, sometimes at the close; and sometimes in the very midst of the discussion. The manner in which the sessions develop, the attitude of the children, and the material under consideration will have to determine the form and place of the worship. The important thing to remember in each case is that it be personal, that it bring God into the everyday experience of the worshippers.

Suggestions for Individual Sessions:

COMMANDMENTS I AND II

A Story Suggestion:

IT HAPPENED IN OKOYONG

Mary Slessor was going to Okoyong.

"Ma, our beautiful beloved mother is on board,

Ho, ho, ho!"

chanted the men who paddled her canoe, the men who loved her as though she were their mother.

But Mary Slessor did not sing. She was thinking. She was thinking about Okoyong and wondering how its king and people would greet her. No one else had been able to land in the territory of this African tribe. The people were proud and warlike. Every man, woman and child went about armed, and even ate and slept with his gun and sword by his side. They roamed about in bands watching the forest paths, catching and selling as slaves or as food all who passed by. They were cannibals and everyone was afraid of them.

The British soldiers were afraid of them, for they had said that they would have nothing to do with law and had driven out the soldiers and government officers. The other missionaries in Africa were afraid of them, for they had threatened the lives of all who had come near. The Africans of Calabar and surrounding regions were afraid of them because they had sworn their enmity to them. But Mary Slessor, somehow, was not afraid. "They are the way they are because they do not have the love of God in their hearts," she said. "Once they know Him, they will be different."

She had felt this way about Africans when she was a little factory girl in Scotland and had heard stories of how the African people threw twin babies out to die because they thought they brought bad luck. She had felt this way about them all the twelve years she had been in Africa, teaching them and taking care of little outcast children. And she felt this way now.

For a year, she had been trying to come to Okoyong. The traders and government officers shook their heads. "It is a gun-boat they need, not a missionary," they had told her.

"It is the love of God they need, not a gun-boat," insisted Mary Slessor.

At last she persuaded her friends to let her go. Immediately she sent messengers to the Okoyong people to ask permission to enter.

"We want no missionary, man or woman," they had answered.

Time after time, the messengers went and returned each time, with the same message.

Finally, Mary Slessor decided to go ask the permission for herself. Going to King Eyo, the king of Calabar, she was able to get a canoe, a hollow tree trunk twenty feet long with a little arch of palm leaves to shade her from the sun. Telling the other missionaries and her little adopted African children goodby, she crawled into her little boat and lay down on the pillows. It was good to lie down under the green leaves and watch the African forest pass on each side. It was good to listen to her boatmen sing. It was good to have time to think about what she would do when she reached Okoyong and to ask God to guide her acting and speaking.

When at last she reached the strip of beach where the boatmen said she must get off if she wanted to see the king of Okoyong, her heart did begin to pound rather loudly. "I mustn't be afraid," she told herself. "God is with me."

Through the forest she went. For four miles she tramped, until she came to the village of King Edem, the king of Okoyong. Shouts arose as she came near the village.

"Ma has come! Ma has come!" she heard the people say. To her surprise they ran out to meet her and gave her a glad welcome. Surely God had been working on their hearts already.

King Edem invited her to stay in the village that night. Although her bed was an uncomfortable one of dirty sticks and corn-husks; although there were three women and a baby in the same bed with her and goats and sheep and cows and dogs right outside, she was thankful that the people had spared her life. "Even though the bed is not comfortable, I can have a nice, comfortable night in my own heart," she told herself.

The next day, all the important men of the district came to see her. When they saw the kind and brave look in her eyes, and heard her ask, so sweetly, to stay, they could not but give her permission. Not only did they give her permission to come and live among them, but they told her that they would give her ground for a church and a school, and would promise safety to anyone who lived with her.

"Now I can protect the slaves and the women and the little twin babies of Okoyong," thought Mary Slessor happily as she left that day. "Now I can teach them of God. Surely when they know Him they will change their evil ways."

And so Mary Slessor went back to Calabar for her adopted family and brought them and her things back to Okoyong. This time it was quite a procession which trailed through the forest. But what

a queer procession it was! In front was the biggest boy she was caring for, eleven years old; he was carrying a box of bread and tea and sugar on his head; next came a little boy of eight with a kettle and pots; next a tiny little fellow of three came crying as he stumbled over roots. A little girl, called Janie, tried to help him over the hard places but she, too, was afraid and tired. Last of all came Mary Slessor carrying a little baby slavegirl on her shoulders, singing as gaily as she could to cheer up the others. At last they reached the village in which King Edem lived; but no one greeted them, no one made a noise. Mary Slessor shouted and only two slaves appeared.

"Where is the chief? Where are the people?" she asked.

"They have gone to the death feast at the next village, Ma," answered the slaves.

"The death feast," thought Mary Slessor. "They are up to their evil ways right now, killing and eating real people. We must teach them of God."

In a tiny hut, she put the children to sleep and waited for the carriers with the rest of the baggage. At last they came and so did the chief and the people.

The people did not hurt Mary Slessor and her children, but they did not change their ways for her. They went on day and night drinking gin, making sacrifices to their juju gods, scolding and quarreling, fighting and killing. "Ma," they would say, "we like you and we want to learn book knowledge and wear clothes, but we don't want to change our ways."

"We shall see," said Mary Slessor. And she went on working.

Every day she held a school in her yard for children, mothers and fathers, and even grandmothers and grandfathers. She taught them their A.B.C.'s and she taught them more, too. She taught them to look up through the trees and feel that God was there. She told them about their God and sang songs of His love.

But all the time she was there, terrible things were happening. If a crime was committed, they made all who might be guilty eat poisoned beans to see whose fault it was. If a man died, they killed his wives, too so that he would have company in the other world. And here, too, they cast away all little twin babies. Mary Slessor's family grew larger and larger, for she took care of all the little cast-aways she could. Hers was a jolly household in the midst of that African forest.

"But they must have a church," thought Mary Slessor. And so she set to work. Because everyone loved her, they began to help, even King Edem himself. At last the church was built! What

preparations were made then; for Mary Slessor had told the people that they should not come to God's house except with clean bodies and clean hearts.

When all were scrubbed and shining, their shouting stopped and they entered the house of God quietly with bowed heads. Inside was Ma, speaking to them of God, telling them that He was there. Somehow, they felt that what she said was true.

When she finished speaking, the chiefs arose and said that they and the people would respect the building, that no weapon of war would ever be brought into it, that all their quarrels would be left outside. They promised to come to the services and send their children to the school.

It was a glad, glad time for Mary Slessor. "The people are beginning to worship God," she thought. "They are beginning to change their ways."

But their ways did not change all at once. One day while Mary Slessor was most happy about the way in which the people were beginning to live in peace with each other and to respect the lives of others, she heard that two of the tribes in Okoyong were going to war with each other. In spite of the fact that the two tribes lived far on the other side of the forest, Mary Slessor prepared to go to them. King Edem tried to stop her. "Ma, you are going into a wild beasts' den," he said. "You cannot possibly come back alive."

But Mary Slessor would not be stopped. Off through the forest she went. Wild beasts frightened her, but she prayed and went on. At midnight, she reached a village and tried to borrow a drum from the chief. "It will scare away the wild beasts," she explained.

The chief would not give her a drum. "If there is a war," he answered her, "a woman is not likely to stop it."

"You think only of the woman," came her answer. "You have forgotten the woman's God. I go without a drum." And so she did.

On she went until, suddenly out of the darkness men swarmed around her. "What have you come for?" they asked.

"I have come to stop the war," she answered.

"You won't do that," they laughed. "It will take more than a woman to stop this war."

"Let us have a council and talk things over," suggested Mary Slessor. "Maybe we can make peace that way."

"All right, Ma. Go to sleep. We will have the council in the morning."

But when Mary Slessor awoke, she found they had lied to her. They were already about to attack, uttering wild war whoops.

She dashed into their midst. "Don't act like beardless boys," she said with scorn. "Be quiet!"

The men stopped, astonished. There was something in her eyes they had never seen before. They watched her as she went on to the enemy lines, the enemy all ready to fight.

"I salute you," she said.

No one answered her. What was this white woman here for? Why was she interfering with their affairs? They frowned and began to get angry; but Mary Slessor began to smile at them and to say friendly, funny things.

After a time, an old man stepped out from the crowd. "Ma", he said, "Do you remember me? You nursed me when I was about to die. You made me well. We want to say that this war is caused by a foolish quarrel. We know it will bring harm to many. We want you to make peace."

Mary Slessor's heart beat with joy. Soon she had a number of men from each side talking over the matter and, after a long, long talk, they said they would send their men to their homes. There would be no war.

It was night again when Mary Slessor set out for home. But she was not afraid. Her God had stopped a war. Could He not keep her safe as long as He needed her?

Because Mary Slessor was the only one who had ever been able to lead the people of Okoyong to obey the laws and give up their old evil ways, the British Government made her the Viceroy and Judge of Okoyong. Now, the people came to her to settle their quarrels. But how different her court was from any other in the world. She sat out under the trees and knitted while the people told her their troubles. And then she gave her judgment. They took her verdict as just. "She is a God-woman," they said.

More and more they came to the church. More and more they began to live the God-life. "They go together—the worship of God and the good life," thought Mary Slessor. "I always knew they did."

Thoughts and Questions for Discussion:

Discussing the story of Mary Slessor

What difference did the worship of God make in Calabar?

Why is our country different from countries which do not know God?

What difference should the worship of God make in us?

Do we have idols in America? What are they?

Anything we love more than we love God is an idol. e.g., money, our own way, things, (No man can serve two masters . . . Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matthew 6.24)

In Deuteronomy 6:5, Moses says that we should love God with our hearts, souls, and strength. How can we love Him with our hearts? With our souls? With our strength?

Possible Activities:

Committee work on class project

Individual work in notebooks

Picturing foreign idols

Picturing "American idols" not made of wood and stone

Picturing ways in which we can love God with our hearts, souls, and strength

Finding and writing stories showing how these commandments may be kept or broken today

Writing prayers which tell God of our love

Drawing pictures of incidents from Mary Slessor's life or showing the difference the worship of God made in Calabar

COMMANDMENT III

Thoughts for Discussion:

What our family name stands for in the eyes of others depends upon what we say or do. Just so, as Christians, we honor or dishonor God's Name.

The name, "Jehovah", was so sacred to the Jews that they never spoke it. Certain groups of Jews today never use it except in a very serious church service where the priest speaks the name while the congregation stands in reverence.

When the monks of the middle ages copied the Bible by hand, they always wiped their pens and dipped them freshly into the ink before writing the name of God. Once they had begun writing the name, they never stopped until they were through, not even for kings or generals.

Possible Activities:

Discussing the story told by the teacher

Committee work on class project

Individual work

Listing ways in which we can show reverence for God's name

Discussing the effect of cursing on us and on others' conception of God

Looking at "coats-of-arms" to determine what sort of families owned them

Drawing a "coat-of-arms" for the family of God

Comparing these drawings with "coats-of-arms" of church groups

Finding or writing stories showing how this commandment might be kept or broken today

Stories:

"The Name 'Christian'"

The story "Just A Little Thing," printed on page 55 might be used, here, to show the responsibility of living up to God's name which is laid upon every Christian.

"Hallowed Be Thy Name," in Blanche Carrier's *The Kingdom of Love* is a splendid story to develop reverence for the use of God's name.

"The Strong Man" (IV, p. 18) is also appropriate here.

THE NAME "CHRISTIAN"

(The incidents used in the following story were originally told by Miss Irene Forsythe, a missionary to China.)

The city of Sutsien, China, was surrounded by the soldiers of the defeated Communist army; but the gates of the city were closed to them.

"Send us out ten thousand dollars. If you do not send the money immediately, we will break down your gates and sack your town," cried the Communists.

"We do not have ten thousand dollars in cash in our city," replied the town magistrate. "If you give us three days, then we will send to the next city where we have money in the bank, and get the money for you."

"You lie," answered the leader of the Communists. "You want to send to the next town in order to get soldiers to fight for you. We will not let you go. Throw us the money before the sun goes down. If you do not, we will break down your gates and come in."

"Truly, we will get the money in three days," answered the magistrate. "Can you not take the word of an honest government official?"

"No," answered the Communist. "You lie."

"Will you take the word of the whole town council?" asked the magistrate, frantically thinking of all the ruin the soldiers would do if they once got within the walls. "Truly, we are not plotting against you."

"No, I will not take the word of the council," answered the leader. "They also can lie."

"Whose word will you take?" cried the magistrate, desperately.

"I have heard that there are a Christian minister and a Christian missionary in your city," answered the leader. "Christians tell the truth. I have never yet caught one in an untruth. Send them to me and I will believe the words they say."

The Chinese minister and American missionary went to see the Communist leader, told him that the words of the magistrate were true words, were granted the three days of grace, and went back to the magistrate with the good news that the city was saved.

"Because you Christians live up to the name of your God, our city is saved," he said.

"I hope none of us ever make others think less of the Name," answered the pastor.

"I would like that Name," answered the magistrate.

"Christ can make you worthy of it," replied the missionary, simply.

COMMANDMENT IV

Thoughts and Questions for Discussion:

What would happen if—
- a farmer never gave his land a rest?
- a man worked his horse seven days a week?
- you had to go to school every day, even Saturdays?

How did the Chinese get their first knowledge of the Sabbath? (See following excerpts from Chinese classics)

Why does God ask us to use one day out of seven for rest and worship?

What did Bill gain by keeping Sunday as a holy day?

Possible Activities:

Studying and discussing what Jesus thought of this commandment and how He spent the Sabbath (Mark 1:21-31; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 14:1-6)

Discussing present-day problems of Sabbath keeping such as those found in III-24

Committee work on project

Individual activity
- Listing reasons for Sabbath-keeping
- Listing results of Sabbath-breaking
- Planning a Sunday Jesus would enjoy if He were a boy again living in our town
- Collecting pictures, stories and poems which illustrate the fourth commandment

Some excerpts from Chinese classics:

The non-Christian Chinese have a ten-day week, with no Sabbath. and yet, *"It is very remarkable and most interesting to find in the Chinese *Yi-ching* a number of very distinct references to the sabbath. This is one of the 'Five Classics.' It was compiled by Confucius, who lived 500 years before Christ, but the material out of

*From a pamphlet, The Sabbath, by Wm. F. Junkin, Sr., Presbyterian missionary to China.

which it was compiled is of far more remote antiquity. Most of it is said to have come down from the days of Yao and Shun, whose dates are given as over two thousand years B.C., which would be before the time of Abraham. So these sayings have been handed down in this old land of China—far, far removed from Canaan—from a period some hundreds of years before Moses and the giving of the Mosaic ritual in the wilderness. Let us examine some of these musty records.

"The seven-day cycle" is used often today in China for Sunday.

"On the cycle day one sees the heart of Heaven." There is undoubted reference here to time for meditation and worship.

"Former kings when this day came closed their office doors." "Merchants and travelers ceased to travel. The Empress made no examinations." These three expressions seem to indicate that all classes, high and low, made this day a day of rest.

"Observing the seven-day cycle, thereby profit will come from every quarter."

"Do not neglect the cycle day for improving the moral nature."

"Forgetting the cycle day, there will come a curse, there will follow misfortune."

These records of a sacred day of rest and worship in this separated land of China, dating back to the beginnings of their history, confirm the Scripture account that this day of rest was ordained at the beginning of the whole human race; and it was ordained, not for Israel only, but for all mankind.

A Story Suggestion:

BILL TAKES A DARE

"Bill."

"Yes, sir?"

"Step into my office a minute, will you? I want to see you."

Bill stepped into the office of Professor Richardson but he did not want to. Mrs. Morris' furnace needed coal this very minute. He was already late, for his chemistry experiment had kept him overtime.

"Sit down, Bill," said the professor as he entered the room. "You look tired. You are working too hard. You must get a good rest tomorrow. Tomorrow is Sunday, you know."

"Oh, but I can't rest on Sundays," answered Bill. "You see, I am working my way through college. I get my board and room by keeping up the furnace at the place where I live, and I get a part of my tuition by helping in the chemistry lab. That leaves me less time for study than most boys. I have to work hard for my classes, too, for if I do well I can get a scholarship and get into medical school free. If I do not get good grades, I will never be able to be

a doctor. You see it is very important that I use every minute of my time.I have to work all day Sunday."

"I don't agree with you," said the professor. "I believe that if you take one day a week for rest and the worship of God you will be able to do more and better work the six days you have left. Why don't you try it?"

"I don't dare," said Bill. "Suppose my grades went down?"

"Try it for a few months," begged Professor Richardson. "See how it works. If you get lower grades, you can go back to your old way of doing things and say that I am wrong. If it works, you will have your grades and a stronger body, too. Try it!"

"Well, I will," said Bill. "Thanks for your advice."

The furnace was almost out when Bill reached his boarding house. With a little nursing, however, it was again blazing merrily enough for him to leave. "The old professor is all wrong," he muttered as he went up to his room to wash up for dinner. "Just as crazy as a loon, but I like him."

The next morning, Bill came down to breakfast dressed in his Sunday best.

"Why, Bill," said Mrs. Morris. "Why all the holiday clothes?"

"It is a holiday," said Bill. "I'm going to church with you."

"Well, this *is* something new," said Mrs. Morris.

Bill had forgotten how restful church was. The organ music, the soft light, the quiet, all made him feel that he was far, far away from the things that had been troubling him all week. The sermon and the prayers somehow made him feel stronger than he had felt in months, strong enough to face anything.

"Are you going back to the chemistry lab this afternoon?" asked Mrs. Morris at dinner.

"No, I think that I'll take a nap and then get Jim to walk to the top of Lookout Mountain with me. I have been so busy, I haven't seen Jim for weeks."

When Bill came back from his walk, he was jubilant! "I feel like a new man!" he told Mrs. Morris. "The air is snappy and full of zip and the view from the mountain is glorious. I had almost forgotten what a wonderful world it is to live in. I had almost forgotten, too, what a swell fellow Jim is. My, but I'm glad I went."

"What about all the studying you usually get done on Sunday?" asked Mrs. Morris. "When will you finish that?"

"Oh, I'll manage somehow," said Bill. "I feel now that it couldn't take me any time to write that history paper. I'm going to get up early in the morning to tackle it. It is to bed for me now! I'm going to sleep like a log."

Two and a half months later, Bill appeared in Professor Richardson's office, a broad grin on his face.

"You win, Professor," he said as he reached out his hand for a good shake. "I brought down three A's and two B's this time and feel like a million dollars. And you know what? There is more to this Sunday business than you told me there was. I feel that God is, somehow, a real Friend to me, now that I have taken time to know Him. You know, I believe that a part of my new energy comes from Him, not just from the rest I've had. He helps me to think and to solve my problems, too. Thanks a thousand times for the tip."

And Professor Richardson smiled as if to say, "I told you so."

COMMANDMENT V

Thoughts for Discussion:

What would happen if—

our homes had no mothers and fathers?

in our homes, the boys tried to make the living, the girls tried to keep house, and the parents went to school?

the children were in control in our homes and the parents always obeyed?

Is it true that our "days may be long" if we honor our fathers and mothers? Why?

Possible Activities:

Finding out how Jesus kept the fifth commandment (Luke 2:40-52)

Committee work on project

Individual activity

Listing reasons why obedience to parents affects the length of our life

Writing an imaginary story of the boy Jesus, showing how He kept the fifth commandment

Collecting pictures, stories, and poems which illustrate the fifth commandment

Illustrating or dramatizing the poem, "Which Loved Her Best?" or the story, "Away from Home"

Poem and Story Suggestions:

The old poem found in a number of children's books beginning, "'I love you, Mother,' said little John," and ending "Which of them really loved her best?" would be most appropriate.

AWAY FROM HOME: A story of the little captive maid who, even though far from home, remembered her parents' teaching. II Kings 5:1-15.

COMMANDMENTS VI AND VII

Thoughts and Questions for Discussion:

God is the Creator of all life.

Man can create things, but he cannot create life.

In what ways is a man like God and different from animals?

What reasons do we have for believing that every person, rich or poor, black or white, sick or well, educated or uneducated, good or bad, is valuable in God's sight?

In what ways can we hurt life without actually killing? (We can kill others' happiness, self-respect, love, etc., without killing their bodies.)

In what ways can we help God care for growing things?

In what ways can we help God care for animals?

What would happen to children if mothers and fathers refused to take care of them? Why do you think God commanded men and women to be true to their promises to love each other and to make a happy home?

Possible Activities:

Discussing the story told by the teacher
Committee work on project
Individual activity
  Answering some of the above questions in individual notebooks
  Picturing the answers to some of the above questions
  Collecting pictures, stories or poems showing the results of keeping or breaking the sixth and seventh commandments
Doing something, as a class or as individuals, to help preserve the life of flowers or of animals
Doing something, as a class or as individuals, to help people in hospitals who are trying to get their health back
Thinking of ways in which we can keep our own bodies strong

Story and Poem Suggestions:

THEY BOTH GREW UP

"John, John, look what I have shot this morning!" cried Jack.

John looked up from the cleaning of his bird-bath and gasped with horror at what he saw in Jack's hand.

"Oh, Jack, six little sparrows! Why did you kill them? They can't do you any good."

"Oh, but they do help me. They show what a good shot I am. I think I will learn how to stuff birds so that I can keep them to show people. If I do this well every day, I shall have a big collection in no time!"

With that he dashed into the house to show his game to his mother.

"Those poor little sparrows," thought John. "I imagine they were having a lot of fun before Jack killed them. I would like to be one myself, to look in on people from the window sills and to fly

high in the air. But I'd rather be a woodpecker like the one I saw digging in a tree this morning, or a red-bird who sings so beautifully. I must go fix the bird house now. The wind blew it down last night."

And so the boys worked on all summer, Jack killing birds and squirrels and butterflies for his collection and John building bird houses and rabbit boxes and even taking care of a little baby fox whose mother had been killed.

And so the boys grew up. John became a doctor and Jack a scientist.

"Oh, John! My experiment has worked!" announced Jack one day as he came into John's office. "I'll be a rich man one of these days. Army officials have been hunting for just this thing."

"What is it you have made?" asked John.

"A new, powerful explosive," said Jack. "Powerful enough to wipe out whole towns! Powerful enough to blow up mountains!"

"Oh, Jack, why did you invent it?" cried John.

"It will make me famous," said Jack, "and rich. Oh, you just don't understand. You don't care whether you do anything in the world or not," and he left the room banging the door behind him.

Not many nights after this, a huge explosion shook the town. A great part of the finest residential section was in flames. John was called to help the burned and cut and shattered people who were taken from the fire. Many were beyond his help, for they had died already.

"What could have been the cause of all this?" people were asking.

"Some say that that escaped convict, Hazzard, was angry with Judge Calvert who sentenced him to imprisonment and blew up his house for revenge," said one.

"He must have gotten a mighty powerful explosive," remarked another. "Dynamite wouldn't have done all that damage."

Suddenly, into the room where John was working on a wounded man dashed a young man, pale and torn. He had been fighting the fire himself and was covered with soot. For a moment John did not recognize him "Why, Jack," he suddenly cried, "Where are you hurt?"

"I'm not hurt," said Jack. "I wish I were. I wish I had been blown up, too. Do you know what that convict used to blow up the town? He used my explosive. He stole it from my office. I had a hand in killing and hurting all these people! Oh, John, what can I do?"

There was silence for a few moments; then John said, "Help me keep this man from dying."

And Jack did.

"TREES", a poem by Joyce Kilmer

COMMANDMENTS VIII AND IX

Thoughts and Questions for Discussion:

When we are dishonest, who is hurt most?

How is cheating like stealing?

Why is it important to tell the truth?

Possible Activities:

"Weighing" what we gain and what we lose in each of these ways of being dishonest:

When I cheat in an examination

When I take something that does not belong to me

When I keep too much change

When I lie to hide something I have done

When I tell an untrue story about someone

When I let someone be blamed because I won't own up

When I Cheat in an Examination

Which weighs the more?

What I gain	*What I lose*
A good grade	A clear conscience before God
Praise	Real knowledge
A reward (?)	The respect of others
	Self respect

Copying for individual notebooks the poem, "Myself"

Making up stories showing the results of stealing or lying

Story and Poem Suggestions:

THE BOY WHO CRIED WOLF—Aesop in "Aesop's Fables"

PETER IS FORGIVEN—The story of Peter's denial of Christ and his forgiveness by Him, based on the stories found in Matthew 26:31-75, Luke 24:33-34, and John 21:1-17.

Edgar A. Guest's poem, *"Myself,"* in *The Friendly Way,* could be made the basis for discussion, particularly the lines, "I have to live with myself" and "I never can hide myself from me."

JUST A LITTLE THING*

(The incidents used in the following story were originally told by Miss Irene Forsythe, a missionary to China.)

The most profitable season for bandits in North China is when the millet, or "robber's green curtain", is high. No one can tell where the bandits may be moving behind the tall green grain.

One spring the bandits were particularly bad. The churches in the villages and towns of North China announced that their doors were open to Christians who felt it necessary to flee from their homes but that they must leave their money and valuables at the city bank. As it was known that this was the regulation, the churches were unmolested for weeks.

*Reprinted from Westminster Departmental Graded Materials by permission of The Board of Christian Education of The Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

Fung Goa, a young high-school student, was acting as gatekeeper in one of the village churches. It was his duty to meet people at the gate and make sure that they had no valuables with them.

One day Fung Goa was surprised to see a friend come to the gate, leading a donkey on which sat his wife and children.

"Why, Wang San Ga! Is it you?" cried Fung Goa.

"Yes, we, too, have had to flee," answered Wang.

"I am sorry about that," said Fung Goa. "But I am glad you came here. Come right in. No, wait. You have not brought any money or jewels with you? You know our rule. They must be deposited at the city bank."

Wang replied hesitantly: "Well, yes, we have some family jewels but we should hate to put them in the custody of a dishonest merchant or banker. No one will know that we have them, for they are sewed in a bed quilt."

"I am sorry," said Fung Goa. "I am on my honor not to let in anything of value. This rule keeps the church safe."

"Oh, come on! You are too conscientious. Why, when we leave here, our home may have been destroyed. These jewels may be all we have with which to begin life again. You wouldn't put an old friend in a position like that, would you?"

"I don't want to, but—"

"But, for friendship's sake!" cried Wang. "Just this once. No one will know."

"All right, then. Come in." And Fung Goa led the way into the church grounds. All the houses were full, so Wang built a mat shed under a pomegranate tree, while some friends played with the children and others helped Mrs. Wang to get supper.

Fung Goa went back to the gate but for the rest of the day he felt rather uncomfortable.

"Bandits sacked the next town," said a man who came at dusk. "I won't be surprised if we have trouble here before morning."

"Well, we are safe," said another. "The last group of bandits passed by when they heard we had nothing of value. The word of a Christian counts, even with them."

All evening the noise of bandit shots could be heard. The bandits seemed to be coming closer and closer. When at last they broke into the town, Fung Goa had decided to put up as brave a front as possible and ignore the thing he had done. After all, it was "just a little thing." There really wasn't enough jewelry in the church to make the robbing of the place worth while.

"There is nothing of value within," said Fung Goa when the bandits demanded entrance. "We are just a group of Christians with only our food and clothing."

"We shall see," said the bandits gruffly as, with bayonets brandished dangerously, they rushed into the courts. They looked everywhere, overturning boxes, tearing up beds, and searching the people's clothes. Soon they came to Wang's corner of the court and before long, had the jewels in their hands.

"Ha! Nothing of value!" they cried. "These Christians are liars! Search everything! More is hidden!"

The bandits grew infuriated when they could find nothing more. "Burn the old church!" they shouted. And they did.

Down through the country went the angry band, attacking the churches in every town with the cry: "Christians are liars! Get the hidden money of the Christians!"

Fung Goa, left behind to guard the smoldering ruins of his own church, could not put out the fires of regret in his heart.

"It was such a little thing," he sighed over and over again. "I thought that it was such a little thing."

COMMANDMENT X

Thoughts and Questions for Discussion:

"Love envieth not." (I Corinthians 13.4) How is this true?

"The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings."
—Robert Louis Stevenson

"He that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast." (Proverbs 15:15b)

What things, which others have, might Mr. Black covet? What things does Mr. Black have which money cannot buy? (See story, "The Greatest Man in Town.")

What things do we have which money cannot buy?

Possible Activities:

Working on class project

Working in individual notebooks

- Listing all the things each has which money cannot buy
- Collecting pictures, stories, or poems to illustrate this commandment
- Writing a story of a boy or girl who learned to keep this commandment

Talking about people in our town who might be expected to covet health or material things, but who instead keep this commandment and are happy

Story Suggestion:

THE GREATEST MAN IN TOWN

"I'm sorry. Your pictures are not ready today. Mr. Black has been hurt."

"No, the Florida studio will not be opened this winter. Mr. Black has met with a serious accident."

"Yes, we are moving everything from the studio and closing up. The doctor gives no hope of Mr. Black's immediate recovery. The doctor is afraid, now, that his back was actually broken in that car accident. How it happened, I don't know. He was just fixing his neighbor's car, you know."

These remarks were made over twenty years ago. The office is still closed. Mr. Black is still in bed. But no one thinks of him as an invalid. If you were to go to his home town, Tazewell, Virginia, you would hear people talking like this:

"Mr. Black? Why he is just like Santa Claus. You don't see him very often but it is good just to know he is here. He is always jolly and ready to help you."

"If you once order a magazine from Mr. Black, you won't have to bother about it ever again. He never forgets anything and when your subscription is about to run out, he telephones you and asks if you want to re-order."

"How does he write when he can't even prop up on a pillow? You ought to see him! He has a typewriter on a movable rack which he can pull over his bed at an almost up-side-down angle. Why, he has supported himself and his wife and given just lots to the church, too, during these twenty years since he was hurt."

If you went to the Tazewell church, you would see on the pulpit a telephone and would notice that the minister took down the receiver before the service began. If you asked about this strange proceeding, you would get the answer, "Oh, that is Mr. Black's telephone. He is a member of this church, you know, and likes to hear our preacher and worship with the rest of us. He listens at his end of the line all through the service."

If you drove out among the hills around Tazewell, you would see a little chapel built for people who live too far away to get in to the town services. "What chapel is that?" you would probably ask.

"That? Why, that is Black's Chapel. Mr. Black gave the land upon which it is built."

"Couldn't he have gotten someone to farm it for him? Couldn't he have used it for himself?"

"Surely, he could have. But he wanted it used in this way. You see, he is different from most people. Instead of getting angry with God for letting tough luck come his way, he seems to feel that God is still his Friend and that because He is his Friend He can use him even though he is in bed. And God does use him, too. Why, if anyone feels blue in this town, he goes to Mr. Black. If the session of the church has anything important to decide, they meet at Mr. Black's, for he is an elder, you know. I guess he does more for God in this town than almost any other church member, the preacher included."

"This must make him very happy."

"It does. You would think he would be coveting the health and fun and money that other people have, but he doesn't. He is in pain sometimes, I know, and gets terribly tired of just lying there. But his wife helps him out in that. She is the cheeriest, bravest person you have ever seen and keeps flowers blooming outside the window and a bird-bath filled with water to draw the birds near for him to watch. She never leaves him for long, for she knows that it is hard to stay alone."

"He must be a miracle, and, she too."

"They are."

REVIEW SESSION

WHAT KEY TO THE KEEPING OF THE COMMANDMENTS DID JESUS GIVE ?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: Exodus 20:1-17—The Law; Matthew 22:35-40—Jesus puts the commandments in a nut shell; Romans 13:8-10—Love fills the law full; Matthew 19:16-22—One thing lacking

Supplementary Materials: Large picture of Hofman's "Christ and the Rich Young Man" or enough small copies of this picture to go around the class. (Geo. P. Brown & Co. 1½c prints.)

Possible Activities:

Drill

Completing the class project

Discussing the commandments Jesus thought most important

Talking about how love fills every law full

Thinking of definite things we must do to keep the law as Jesus means us to keep it

Memorizing Matthew 22:35-40

Answering the Question:

Since the love of God and of our fellowman is the key to the keeping of all the commandments, the children will have little difficulty either in wording or picturing it in a manner adapted to their project.

Suggestions for Worship:

Quiet music while the pictures of "Jesus and the Rich Young Man" are being passed out or the large copy of the picture set up

The story of "Jesus and the Rich Young Man" read from the Bible or told by the teacher while the children study the picture silently

Conversation concerning the picture

Directed silent prayer closing with the prayer hymn, "Father, Lead Me Day by Day"

UNIT III

WHY DO WE HAVE CHURCHES?

(A Bird's-Eye-View of the Foundations of Present-Day Church Worship as Found in the Old Testament)

OBJECTIVES:

To lead the children into an understanding of the contribution of the church to the individual and to the world

To lead them into an appreciation of all that the church has done and can do for them personally; to lead them to a realization that it is Christ the head of the church, rather than the church, that opens the way to God; to arouse in them the desire to participate in the work of the church

To develop in them a growing reverence for God and for His house and an increasing ability to use the formal means of worship provided by the church; to lead them to accept the way to God which Christ offers and to give to Him their grateful love; to open to them specific avenues of service in the church; to encourage the carrying out of definite projects in their local churches

THE QUESTIONS INDICATED IN THE TABLE OF CONTENTS UNDER THIS UNIT WILL HELP THE CHILDREN DISCOVER THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTION, WHY DO WE HAVE CHURCHES?

POSSIBLE UNIFYING ACTIVITIES:

Making simple models (using clay, soap, wood, paper, boxes, etc.) of the different forms of churches: out-of-door altar, tabernacle, temple, synagogue, modern church in America, churches in China, India, Africa, etc.

Making a picture or poster book containing drawings and photographs of the above

Making models or drawing pictures of the symbols of worship: altar, laver, candlestick, showbread, ark of the covenant, and modern architectural symbols

Planning a series of tableaux depicting various forms of Hebrew and Christian worship

Original dramatizations of scenes showing the church at work, then and now

Learning and singing the songs of the church, beginning with the Psalms

Planning and carrying out a closing program, sharing findings with some other group (including exhibit of year's work)

Writing the story of why we have a church
Listing, in words or drawings, the furnishings of the tabernacle with their meaning
Making a page of worship symbols used in churches today
Collecting pictures of various types of churches
Collecting pictures showing the church at work in the world today
Listing ways in which the church helps us
Listing ways in which we help the church

THEME HYMN FOR THE UNIT:

Holy, Holy, Holy

MEMORY PASSAGE FOR THE UNIT:

Psalm 24 and Psalm 100

INTRODUCTORY SESSION:
LAUNCHING THE UNIT AS A WHOLE

A Launching Story:

THE TOWN NOBODY WOULD LIVE IN

It was truly the town of his dreams, a perfect town, all worked out in wood and stone just as he had imagined it so often while he was planning it; but Mr. Walton knew that something was wrong. He had not suspected it at first when the Emersons had moved, nor even when the Sloans had followed a few weeks later. But when the Perrys and the Stantons and the Wadsworths had left in rapid succession and moved to neighboring towns, he had begun to suspect that in the town he had thought so perfect something was wrong.

And now the Bakers were leaving—or so he had heard that morning—and that was the last straw! Why, he had considered Lewis Baker one of his close friends. What reason could he have for leaving? Where could he find a town half so fine as this for himself and his family? And why wasn't Baker man enough to come and talk it over with him? Mr. Walton's shoe beat a tattoo on the deep rug as he sat and puzzled over the matter. Hard as it was for him to believe it, he knew now that something must be wrong in this town he had built with such pride and satisfaction. But what could it be?

The ringing of his 'phone broke into his thoughts, but his secretary's voice carried him right back to his problem.

"Mr. Lewis Baker is here, Mr. Walton. He would like to see you for a few moments. When will it be convenient, please?"

"Have him come right in."

Before Mr. Baker had a chance to knock at the office door, Mr. Walton himself opened it, saying, "Well, Baker, I wondered when you'd be coming to break the news."

"So you've heard that we're moving, Mr. Walton. I'm sorry, for I had meant to be the first to tell you. I guess the real-estate agent who's getting a house for us must have told someone in town. We're not going for another month."

"But why on earth go at all, Baker? What's wrong with this town anyway? Do you know of another town that's like it? Name a town that has all of its homes as attractive and comfortable as ours; name a town that has as many opportunities for earning a living as we have here; name a town that has as good a school system or as fine teachers as ours; name a town that has such an up-to-date hospital and such excellent doctors—at low cost, too—as ours has!" Mr. Walton was getting more and more excited and talking faster and faster. "Name a town," he went on, almost out of breath, "Name a town that has the library, theatre, and playground our town has!"

"You're absolutely right, Mr. Walton," said Mr. Baker, quietly. "There isn't another town anywhere that I know of that can even begin to measure up to this town in the things that you have mentioned. Don't think we haven't thought of that. We've said it ourselves over and over again. Don't think it was easy to decide to move. We love our home here and all the fine things you have provided for the town. We've appreciated more than I can tell you the privilege of living here. Don't think I don't know what this town means to you and how it must hurt you to see us moving out. That's why we haven't made our decision sooner, for we've been thinking of it ever since the Emersons left. Your friendship has meant a lot to me and I hate to do anything to hurt you."

"Then what is it, Baker?" asked Mr. Walton. "You're a man whom I have always admired because you're a man of character, and I know you wouldn't make a change like this without a good reason. What is it? What's wrong with the town I thought was perfect?"

"Well, Mr. Walton, it's this," answered Mr. Baker, slowly. "When you built this town which in all other ways is about as perfect as any town could be, you left out the most important thing of all, the thing that's so important that all these other things can't take its place—you left out the church! And we've decided that we can get along without some of these other fine things but we can't get along without a church!"

Mr. Walton looked at him in amazement. "Do you mean to say you would rather live in a second-rate home and send your children to a second-rate school in a town where there's a church than to live in your fine home and send your children to our excellent school in our town where there's no church?"

"That's just what I mean, Mr. Walton," Mr. Baker replied. "I know you think the church is out-of-date, something we don't need any more in our day. You think having a good job and a nice automobile and an electric refrigerator can take the place of the church. But they can't, Mr. Walton. My wife and I—just like all the other folks who've moved—have found out that the church means more. We need a place where we can meet with others to worship God. We need to hear and think about His Word and His Ways; we need a preacher to visit us when we're sick or in trouble. We need the help of the church in bringing up our children to know and love God. And we need the church to help us do some good in the world. One man alone can't do much to help other people, but a group of people working together with God in a church can do a great deal. We've found out that life without God doesn't mean much and the church somehow helps us to keep in closer touch with Him. That's why we're going to leave town."

There was a moment of silence. Then Mr. Walton said, "Baker, I guess you're right. I think down underneath I've known it all along, but I was too proud to admit it. We'll have a church!"

They did. And the Bakers didn't move after all.

The Follow-Up:

With the above story paving the way for the central question of this unit, the effect may be heightened by the use of a variety of pictures of churches: e.g., village churches dominating the landscape, cathedrals, churches in the local community, churches in foreign lands. A map of the county or city on which all churches are located, would add to the interest. All of this would naturally lead into a discussion of the fact that the church seems to be important, culminating in a consideration of the question, "Why do we have a church?" with preliminary answers as found in the launching story.

Formulating a Purpose:

This done, the group may be led to see that the question is worthy of further consideration and to set up as their definite purpose the finding of other answers to the question, "Why do we have a church?"

Making Plans for the Unit:

Using the blackboard, the teacher can now guide the children to suggest subsidiary questions they should like to have answered, including those suggested (Why was the first church built? What was the first church like?, etc.) Available sources for finding the answers may be listed, and some form of unifying activity for recording findings decided upon, with plans for carrying it out (materials to be used, where to get materials, how to work out the activity, appointing committees, etc.).

Climaxing in Worship:

Thinking a moment of all that the church means to us today

Praying: giving thanks for the church, asking for God's continued care of the church, asking His help in the study of the church

Scripture Story and Reading: With children prepared beforehand to read the following—Genesis 8:20; 12:7-8; 13:1-4, 18 — the teacher may give the background of each incident, emphasizing man's need of some definite place to remind him of God's presence and goodness.

WHY WAS THE FIRST CHURCH BUILT?
(A Study of the Building of the Tabernacle)

Material for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: Exodus 24:15-18—Moses in the Mount with God; 25:1-9, 22—God commands the people to build Him a church where He may meet with them and promises to give Moses the pattern for it; 35:20-29; 36:2-7—The people are glad to bring their gifts and to have part in the building of the church; 39:32, 43; 40:34-38 — The church completed and God's presence made known; Matthew 18:20—The church of Christ has the same reason for being as had the tabernacle.

Supplementary Materials: Additional pictures of churches, collected by the children themselves; stories of people of today who are sacrificing that they may have a church; poems about churches

A Sample Poem:*

"The spires of country churches,
Simple, tall, and true,
Built by village carpenters—
A craft the Master knew;
The bells of country churches,
Solemn, sweet, and clear,
Singing across the dusky fields,
Calling that He is near.
The folk of country churches,
Following where He trod,
Loyal as were His fisher folk—
Witnesses of God!"

—Leslie Savage

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Possible Activities:

Thinking about the early people, like Noah and Abraham, who had no church but who built altars out-of-doors to worship God; thinking about the question, Why was the first church built?

Listening to the story of God in the midst of His people (Exodus 32; 35:5-19; 35:21-36:7; 39:32, 43; 40:17-38)

Listing and discussing the answers found in the story

Looking for stories of people building and dedicating churches today

Beginning work on the unifying activity chosen

Studying Psalm 24 or 100 in preparation for memorizing it to use in worship

Studying the theme hymn, "Holy, Holy, Holy"

Learning the following as a Call to Worship, preferably sung:

"The Lord is in His holy temple,
Let all the earth keep silence before Him."
—Habakkuk 2:20

Reading together Matthew 18:20, our reason for going to church

Answering the Question:

In some definite way the thought of the session should be clinched by recording its findings, simply in statement form on the blackboard or as part of the class activity—a poster, page for class book, or whatever it may be.

Suggestions for Worship:

Keeping silence before God, perhaps while listening to worshipful music

Talking about our attitude in church, bringing out the thought of reverence and stillness that we may "tune in" to God and hear Him speak to us; talking about what others have said of the church: the Psalmist, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord;" Jesus, quoting God, His Father, "My house shall be called a house of prayer."

HOW DO CHURCHES HELP US TO COME CLOSER TO GOD?

(Studies Based upon the Symbolism of the Tabernacle)
(Pre-Easter Sessions)

Material for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: Exodus 39:32-43; 40:1-34 — Description of the tabernacle, its structure, furnishings, and arrangement

Supplementary Materials: Pictures and diagrams of the tabernacle and its furnishings; pictures of altars and symbols used in modern churches

Activities Which Will Help the Children To Answer the Question:

Going to the Bible for a description of the first church

Listing all the furnishings of the tabernacle

Working out or studying a diagram of the arrangement of the tabernacle

Discussing the meaning of these furnishings and their arrangement:

Why was the first church building a tent? Why was the tabernacle covered with rams' skins dyed red, and sealskins? Why was the tabernacle itself overlaid with gold? As a worshipper entered the court at the east, what did he find? What did it mean?

Altar of burnt offerings—the need of confession and sacrifice

Laver—the need of inner cleansing symbolized by the washing of the hands and feet of the priest who was to offer the sacrifice for the worshipper

Holy Place—only the priests permitted to enter here to pray for the worshipers

Seven-branched Candlestick (or Lampstand)—the people of God and His Church to be lights in the world, not by their own goodness, but by the Spirit of God in them (oil in lamps)

Table of Showbread—table of gold, with twelve loaves of bread in two piles (new bread every Sabbath—old eaten by priests) symbolizing recognition of God as the Source of all we have, expressing gratitude and dependence upon Him to continue to supply our needs

Altar of Incense, placed directly in front of Holy of Holies—man's worship and prayer going up before God

Holy of Holies—separated by a Curtain ("veil") from the Holy Place—symbolizing the very Presence of God, entered only once a year, on the Day of Atonement, by the high priest after careful bathing

Ark of the Covenant—a wooden chest, covered outside and inside with gold, containing the stone tablets of the commandments (symbolizing the enshrining of the will of God at the heart of His worship), a pot of manna (a reminder of God's goodness), Aaron's rod (a reminder of the delivery out of Egypt), and the whole book of the law (a reminder of the sin of the people in having failed to obey this law); its cover, with the figures of two cherubim facing each other with wings outspread, called the "mercy seat" (representing God's mercy in spite of man's sin)

This discussion could be climaxed by thinking of the name given the tabernacle, "the tent of meeting", between God and His people, and of its significance in the daily life of the Israelites on the march (always placed in the center of the encampment, with the tents of the priests surrounding it, and with the rest of the people, grouped according to their tribes, encamped about them — three tribes to the east of the tent of meeting, three to the south, three to the west, and three to the north), the cloud resting upon it by day, the pillar of fire by night.

Recording findings in some concrete form to add to group project
Continuing study of Psalm 24 or of Psalm 100

Suggestions for Worship:

Call to Worship: The Lord is in His holy temple,
Let all the earth keep silence before Him.

Scripture: Numbers 9:15-23 may be told or read with comment, emphasizing the thought of God in our midst, forgiving our sins, letting us talk with Him, talking with us, and guiding us if we let Him

Prayer of thanks for all His goodness

Related Activities: (Probably a second session)

Thinking of the first church and of all that it had in it to remind the people of God and of how it must have helped them to worship Him

Continuing drill on Psalm 24 or 100

Studying the things in our own churches today which help us to worship Him:

Furnishings and parts of the church itself:

Lamps stand for Christ, the Light of the world.

Candles stand for sacrifice, the giving of self that others might have light.

The bricks or stones in the church stand for the Christians who work together with God in the church.

The pillars stand for church leaders.

The steeple points to God.

Designs:

A circle stands for the love of God.

A six-pointed star stands for God, the Creator.

A five-pointed star stands for Jesus.

A triangle or any design made up of three stands for God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Designs made up of "two's" stand for Christ who is God and man.

Colors: (The children will be able to contribute to the discussion of the meaning of some of these.)

White stands for purity or joy.
Red stands for courage, sacrifice, and love.
Blue stands for truth and faithfulness.
Yellow and gold stand for the goodness of God.
Green stands for the hope of eternal life.
Purple stands for royalty.
Brown stands for unselfishness.

This preliminary study of church symbolism should be followed by a visit to a local church where, notebooks in hand, the children should be led to discover for themselves the symbols whose meanings they already know, and to ask about symbols with which they are unfamiliar. Below are some common additional symbols they may find:

An anchor stands for hope.
A crown stands for the life Christians will live with Christ through eternity.
A door stands for salvation, the Way to God.
A dove stands for the Holy Spirit.
A harp stands for joy.
A lamb stands for Christ.
A lily stands for the resurrection.
Scales stand for justice.
A scroll stands for the word of God.
A sheaf stands for God's good gifts.
A shield stands for faith.
A sword stands for courage.
A torch stands for the light of God's wisdom.
A vine with fruit stands for Christ and His friends.

(N.B. The teacher would do well to have in her possession a more complete study of church symbolism. "The Sign Language of Our Faith" by Helen Stuart Griffith is very good.)

The church tour should be conducted in quietness and reverence with the children writing down their discoveries and their questionings. At some signal from the teacher, possibly quiet music on the piano, the children should gather in the front pews of the church to discuss their findings, and to enumerate all the things this church, through its own walls and windows, tells them of God and His Son. They should also be led to bring out the likenesses and differences between this church and the tabernacle.

The discussion should be climaxed by worship.

Suggestions for Worship:

Hymn: Holy, Holy, Holy

Scripture: Psalm 24 or 100

A Sermonette:

God said, "I'm lonely—I'll make me a man!" That is the way in which a negro poet describes the creation of man. And I believe he described it correctly. "I'm lonely", said God, "I'll make me a man."

So He made a man, placed him in a garden, and every evening walked and talked with him there. "If you keep my laws", He said, "You will have life with Me. If you break my laws, there will come death—there will come separation from Me."

But man, selfish, thoughtless man, broke God's law. Ashamed and afraid, he hid himself from God, hid himself like a naughty boy hiding from his father. And then followed the separation God had promised. We can be sure that God was lonely again. For God loved man in spite of man's wrong-doing. And man was lonely, for man needed God.

Because God loved man, He planned to send His Son into the world to bring man back to Him; but since the world was not ready for Christ, He arranged for a way in which man could show that he was sorry for his sin, feel God's forgiveness, and talk with Him again. He told man to take from his flock of lambs, or goats, or bullocks a perfect animal, one without even a scratch or a flaw, and to offer this animal on an altar before Him. God said that He would let the death of the animal stand in the place of the deserved death of the man and that, if the man was sincere in his offering, He would forgive and man could talk and walk with Him again.

And so through the ages we find people bringing their sacrifices to show God their repentance, to show God that they knew they deserved death, and through the ages we find God, from His great heart of love, forgiving man and walking and talking with him. But not all men took advantage of God's offer. At times there was hardly anyone on the earth who remembered that there was a God. These forgetful ones were unhappy. And God was unhappy, too; for God loved man.

And then God began to work out a plan. He began to train a whole nation to love and serve Him. Through their leader, He spoke to these people, "I want you to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, a kingdom of people who are not afraid to talk and walk with me because their hearts are holy." And one day, from

the top of a high mountain, God spoke to these people directly, spoke with a voice all could hear in words all could understand. He spoke and gave them the laws which would help them to be holy. But the men listening were afraid. They knew they were not holy and they did not want to take the trouble to cleanse their hearts and to keep them clean. They called to their leader and said, "From now on you talk with God and tell us what He says. We are afraid to come to Him."

This was enough to discourage anyone; but God was not discouraged. He asked the people to build Him a house, a tabernacle for Him. Around the house was a court in which there was an altar for the sin offering. In the house was an altar for the incense of prayers. And behind a beautiful blue curtain decorated with embroidered figures of the cherubim, was the ark. And on the ark was the "mercy seat", a place where God's Spirit would come to meet with the people through their High Priest. The whole space behind the curtain was called the "Holy of Holies", because God was there. The room in front of the curtain was called "The Holy Place", because it was very near to God. The people offered their sacrifices in the court and sent one of their holiest men, one of the priests in to offer their prayers to God and to burn the incense of their prayers on the altar before the curtain. Once a year, the High Priest, the most holy of all, went within the curtain to ask God's forgiveness for the nation. The curtain, or as it was then called, the veil, separated God from men, because man was sinful and God was holy, and the two could not meet.

When the people finally built a beautiful church of stone, the temple, they built it on the plan worked out in the tabernacle. Even in the beautiful church of stone, a curtain separated God from man. No one but the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies. All the people offered their sacrifices on the outside.

And then, one day, a wonderful thing happened. There came One into the world who was called "The Lamb of God". No one knew why He had this name until on a hill outside the temple city He gave Himself in death on the cross as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. This "Lamb of God" was the very Son of God, whom God had planned to send from the beginning of the world. At the moment of His death there was great darkness; lightnings flashed and thunder rolled; and the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom.

And so there grew up a church that had no need of sacrifices of blood, that had no need of a set of priests, that had no need of separating curtain. For wherever the members of this church

gathered, there was a Holy Place with God and man meeting together through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God's Son.

And the people who believed were happy. And God was happy with them; for He loved His people and loved to walk and talk with them. But the fellowship begun on earth was not to stop with death: it was to go on forever in God's joyful home in heaven.

And we are His people. And He is our God. And Christ's sacrifice was given, once for all for us. All that is left for us to do is to believe and accept His sacrifice and love, and so to let Him be our Lord and Master.

Sentence prayers of thanksgiving for the fellowship between God and man made possible by Christ; thanksgiving for forgiveness; thanksgiving for the promise of eternal life; personal acceptance.

A Final Suggestion:

As a result of this session, the children who do not attend the church visited should be stimulated to make similar studies of their own churches. The teacher could suggest, for example, "Go to church early this Sunday and while you are there try to feel that God is near. While you are sitting quietly, listening to the music, notice things in the church which speak to you of God. If you find symbols of which we have not talked ask about them in class next week. And as you worship, think of how wonderful it is that you can through Christ, come directly to God instead of being separated from Him by a curtain.

IN WHAT WAYS CAN I WORSHIP GOD IN CHURCH?

(A Study Based upon the Worship Connected with the Bringing-up of the ark to Jerusalem)

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: I Samuel 4:2-18—The ark of God is captured; I Samuel 5:1-6:16—The ark is sent back to Israel; I Samuel 6:20-7:2—for twenty years the ark is kept in Kireath-jearim; I Chronicles 13:1-14—David and his people start to bring the ark to Jerusalem; I Chronicles 15:1-29—the ark is brought to Jerusalem; I Chronicles 16:1-3—With the ark in its tent, the people worship and are glad; I Chronicles 16:4-6—David makes plans for other worship services at the tent church; I Chronicles 16:7-36—The people sing their praise to God; Psalm 24—The King of Glory enters Zion; Psalm 100—A song of glad worship. The Book of Psalms—The hymn-book of the Jerusalem church.

Supplementary Materials: Church bulletins from all churches represented in the class, enough to supply each member with a copy (if possible). Pictures of musical instruments used in David's day; Books of prayers which suggest prayers for use, silently, at the opening of worship, such as "A Prayer Book for Boys," by Margaret Cropper.

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story of the ark of the covenant, based upon above references with emphasis upon the worship of the people as expressed in song

Discussing the story:

Talking of why the first attempt to bring the ark to Jerusalem was not successful

Talking of why the priests purified themselves before they made the second attempt

Reading in the Bible about the organization of the first church choir, I Chronicles 15:16-24; 16:4-6, noticing how Asaph was made the director with Zechariah as his assistant

Talking of the different ways in which the people of David's day worshiped God; with singing, with instrumental music, through the offering of sacrifices, in the singing of a prayer, with the saying of "Amen" ("Amen" which means "so be it, Lord" was used here by the people to show God that the prayer the priests had sung was also the prayer of their hearts.)

Talking of how David collected and wrote songs for use in worship; looking through his "song book", the book of Psalms, to pick out songs written by David, Asaph, or other of the temple singers

Noticing that Moses wrote one of the songs in the book—the ninetieth Psalm

Comparing our methods of worship with those of David's day:
the purification of the priests and our preparation in "heart and hand" for church worship
the music of David's day and ours
the sacrifice of David's day (animals) and ours (Christ)
the offering of David's day (part of the meat was to go to the support of the priests, Lev. 7:31-32) and ours

Asaph's thanksgiving prayers and ours (Could we pray his and mean it?)
the "Amen" of David's day and ours

Talking of the reason back of each item on our church "order of worship;" e.g. the call to worship, the invocation, the quiet music, the offering, etc.

Recording the answer to this session's question in project and notebooks

Dramatizing the bringing up of the ark by working out a dramatic presentation of the story just told or by studying and presenting the musical interpretation of the twenty-fourth Psalm written by Elizabeth McE. Shields and found in "Junior Hymns and Songs"

Planning, rehearsing, and presenting Psalm 24 by means of a speaking choir, divided into three groups—one in each tower and one approaching with the ark (single voices may be used for the questions).

Writing prayers to use silently with bowed heads, just before the beginning of a church worship service. (Remember the minister, the worshipers, the absentees, your own heart attitudes.)

Worshiping with the use of Psalm 100 or Psalm 24, some hymn of praise, and the giving of self in prayer

IS THE CHURCH REALLY GOD'S HOUSE?

(A Study Based upon the Building of the Temple)

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: For Story I—I Chronicles 17:1-2—David wants to build a house for God; I Chronicles 17:3-4; 22:8-10; 17:11-15—God tells David that his son, not he, is the one to build the house; I Chronicles 22:1-19; 28:1-29:22—David prepares the materials for the house of the Lord which his son is to build; I Chronicles 29:6-9—The people give willingly to the church; I Chronicles 29:10-19—David thanks God for His gifts and asks God to bless the builders of the church; I Chronicles 29:20-22—The people worship God

For Story II—I Kings 5:2-12—Two neighboring kings work together; 5:13, 15, 16—Thousands of people are needed to build the house of God; 6:7—The house is built in silence: 6:11-13—God's promise to those who are building His House; 6:21-22, 7:23-25—The richness and beauty of the temple; 6:37-38—The time of building; 8:1-11—The ark is brought into the temple; 8:22-30—Solomon's prayer of dedication

Supplementary Materials: Pictures such as "The Presence" by A. Borthwick (8″ by 10″ copy in sepia for $0.75 or hand colored for $1.00, House of Art).

Possible Activities:

Discussing the background of the building of the temple:
- Why did God tell David that he was not to build Him a house, that Solomon would do it?
- Why did David thank God for the materials for the church instead of thanking the people who brought them?

Discussing and singing "We Give Thee But Thine Own"

Listening to the story, "A House for God"

Discussing the story:
- Why were the people so careful not to make a noise while the temple was being built?
- What kind of materials were used? Why these?
- Why build a house for God when the heaven of heavens is not large enough to hold Him?

Answering the question, Is the church really God's House?

Studying the picture, "The Presence"

Thinking of ways in which we can—
- make our churches more quiet for worship
- make our churches more beautiful for God and His people
- feel God's presence in a more real way when we come into our churches

Talking of how the use of a silent "prayer-on-entering-church" made us feel last Sunday, talking of trying it again

Recording findings in class project and individual note-books

Realizing that since God is not kept in churches but is everywhere, the school-room can be His house too; Worshiping God together in class

Story:

A HOUSE FOR GOD

When Solomon became king, he realized that he had a great task before him, the task of building a house for God.

His father had planned much of it for him, and the people had already brought many of their dearest possessions. Solomon knew the people were eager to have the house built, but it was to be such a great, beautiful building that he hardly knew how to begin.

Now Solomon's father, David, had had a very dear friend whose name was King Hiram. Solomon knew that King Hiram had loved his father, and he knew too that no one could cut wood as well as the people of King Hiram's country. So the first thing he did was to send a messenger to Hiram. "Behold," went the message, "I am planning to build a house for the name of the Lord my God. Will you help us by having your servants cut the fine cedar trees of Lebanon for us?" Hiram was happy to be able to help the son of his old friend, and before long the forests of Lebanon rang with the sound of falling trees. Solomon sent 30,000 men from his country to help Hiram in cutting down the trees!

But this was just the beginning. Besides the people cutting the trees, Solomon had 70,000 men to carry burdens and 80,000 men to mine beautiful stones from the mountains. Then there were 3,300 men who did nothing but rule over those who were doing the work.

And all while this building was being built, not a sound of a tool was heard around the house itself—not a hammer or axe or any tool of iron. Everything that was to go into the house was carefully prepared beforehand, so that there would be no loud noises around God's house.

Nothing but the best materials were chosen to go into the house —no work but that of the most skilled workmen was used; and then as though that were not enough, as each part for the house was finished, it was overlaid with fine gold. The whole house within was overlaid with fine gold, the floor of the house, the door posts and doors, the altar—everything was overlaid with fine gold.

King Hiram sent one of his subjects to Jerusalem to help build the works of brass. This man was also named Hiram and he was a wonderful artist: he made two huge brass pillars each with rows of 200 pomegranates for the temple porch; he made for the court of the temple a large bronze basin in the shape of a lily which held 16,000 gallons of water; he made twelve bronze oxen, to hold up this basin—three looking toward the north, three looking toward the west, three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east. Many other things Hiram made, and altogether he, along with all the thousands of people who were helping, worked on the temple for seven years.

All this time God had been helping Solomon and his helpers and giving them skill and wisdom. God was pleased with the building of this wonderful temple but he felt that he should remind the people of something important. "Building a house for me is good," He said, "but it is not enough. You must let me rule in your lives." And at that time God had made a wonderful promise to Solomon. "If you will walk in my ways and keep all my commandments then I will keep the promise I gave David, your father. I will bless you and I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel and will not forsake my people."

When the temple was finished Solomon remembered what God had told him, and he wanted to help the people to see that the Presence of God was the most important thing about His house. The ark of the covenant was not yet moved to the Holy of Holies in the temple—it was still in the tent; so Solomon called together all the leaders of the people of Israel for this important event—the bringing of the ark into the temple. Reverently, priests took up the ark on its staves and carried it to the Holy of Holies in the temple. They marched along, the leaders of Israel and the heads of the tribes and the princes of the children of Israel, all in a straight line. It was a solemn procession. When they arrived at the temple, Solomon and all the congregation of Israel offered sacrifices to God. Then the priests entered into God's house. Into the holy place they went and on into the Holy of Holies. There the priests set the ark in its place and outside Solomon and his people waited. Out of the Holy of Holies and out through the holy place came the priests. And then it happened. The cloud filled the house of the Lord! The glory of the Lord filled His temple.

Solomon stepped forward and spread forth his hands toward heaven and prayed, saying: "O Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like Thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath. Behold, Thou art so great that heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain

Thee. How much less can this house that I have builded hold Thee! Yet, O Lord my God, hearken unto the prayer which Thy servant prayeth before Thee this day; that Thine eyes may be open toward this house, night and day, even toward the place whereof Thou hast said, 'My name shall be there.' Hearken to the prayer of Thy servant, and of Thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: yea, hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place; and when Thou hearest, forgive!"

After Solomon had finished praying and after the people had again offered sacrifice to God, Solomon sent the people away to continue celebrating God's goodness for another week in their own homes. They went, joyful and glad of heart, happy that they had seen the sign of God's Presence in the beautiful house that they had built for Him.

DOES EVERY CHURCH RECEIVE GOD'S BLESSING?

(A Consideration of the Destruction of the Temple and Its Implications)

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: I Samuel 4:10-11—The ark of God taken by enemies because of the people's sins in the days of Samuel; Jeremiah 7:1-14—The destruction of the temple foretold by Jeremiah; Jeremiah 52:12-19—The temple destroyed and plundered by Nebuchadnezzar; I Samuel 15:22b—God's desire concerning the type of worship to be offered to Him

Supplementary Materials: Pictures of the temple of Solomon, the temple of Zerubbabel, and the temple of Herod, showing exterior and interior views; pictures of the carrying away of the ark of the covenant and of the furnishings of the temple; pictures of the destruction of Jerusalem; pictures of various temple ceremonies, e.g., the offering of sacrifices and the celebration of feast days; pictures of Jeremiah such as that found in Sargent's "Frieze of the Prophets" (W. A. Wilde Co.)

Suggested Activities:

Listening to the story of how the temple was destroyed

Discussing why God let the temple be destroyed

Thinking about ways in which the characters of the people were different from the character of their God

Imagining how the people's insincere prayers and sacrifices must have looked to God

Talking about whether or not God's blessing rests on all churches today

Listening to the teacher tell of how the old orthodox church in Russia has been overthrown because its ceremonies had become empty and meaningless to the majority of people, and its leaders had become greedy of gain (Realizing that there are many sincere Christians in Russia who are desirous of building a new and "live" church)

Thinking of how our life and worship must sometimes look to God, and wondering whether or not our churches deserve His protection and blessing

Thinking of God's message to the people as given by Amos in Amos 5:21 Talking of how it was as startling in Amos' day as a message from God saying "Don't go to church" would be in our day; Talking of what makes church attendance approved by God.

Remembering the meaning of God's message to Saul in I Samuel 15:22b, translating it into modern-church terminology, memorizing it

Thinking back over the story to discover what would have happened if the people had changed their ways in response to Jeremiah's preaching

Talking about what we can do to correct some of the "wrongs" in our church life: e.g., insincerity, thoughtless worship, irreverence, selfishness, wrong living

Incorporating the results of these discussions in the class project and in individual note-books

Planning class worship around the thought: Obedience to God's will is the test of our sincerity in worship.

Story:

HOW THE TEMPLE WAS DESTROYED

Jeremiah, the prophet of God, was sick at heart. He had been wandering through the streets of Jerusalem and it seemed to him that wherever he looked and listened he found wickedness—wickedness even in the very shadow of the temple itself. Here was a merchant using false measures to cheat his customers; here was a man swearing by the name of God that what he said was the truth, while by the look in his eyes Jeremiah knew he was lying; here was an altar to the heathen god, Baal; and, to make it worse, there were the services in the temple going on as usual, with people going to the house of God to offer Him outward worship while all the

time they were doing as they pleased and paying no attention to the commandments of God. Jeremiah could keep quiet no longer. He must warn these people, even as God had commanded him.

"O Jerusalem," he suddenly cried out, "wash your heart from wickedness, that you may be saved! Thus saith the Lord, 'The whole land shall be a desolation. Evil is coming upon you from the north. A great nation is coming against you to destroy you, because you have forgotten Me, your God Who brought you forth out of Egypt, Who led you through the wilderness. What do I care for the burning of incense? What do I want with your burnt-offerings and sacrifices when your hearts are not right?'"

In great surprise, the passers-by stopped to listen to Jeremiah preaching and soon their surprise changed to anger.

"What is he saying?" some cried, "Jerusalem to be destroyed? Impossible!"

"Of course that is impossible," insisted others, "why the temple of the Lord is here! The Lord God of Israel would not let His house be destroyed."

"Come, let us put a stop to his empty words," urged the leaders. "Let us not listen to anything he says. Let us shout together and drown his voice."

"The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these," they shouted, pointing to the gates and the courts and the great temple building.

"They are right," said those whose consciences had begun to prick and who had been troubled by Jeremiah's words. "Jerusalem cannot be destroyed with the temple of the Lord here. He would not permit an enemy to touch His house."

But Jeremiah was speaking again. "Thus saith the Lord your God, 'Change your ways and your doings and I will let you stay in this place. Don't trust in lying words, saying, "The temple of the Lord are these buildings." Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, and worship other gods and then come and stand before Me in this house and say, "We are safe. This is the temple of the Lord"?'"

These words did make a few of the people uncomfortable and they thought seriously of changing their wicked ways. But the rest refused to listen.

So year in and year out, Jeremiah kept on with his preaching. Over and over he warned his people: "Change your ways! Turn back to God! Keep His commandments and walk in His ways! The enemy is going to come. Jerusalem will fall. The house of God will be torn down." But still the people did not like to hear these

things and tried to make Jeremiah keep quiet or change his preaching. Once they even put him in a damp, smelly dungeon, intending to let him starve and die there. But God was with him, as He had promised, and Jeremiah was rescued by a friend. Instead of stopping his preaching, he went right on.

And then the dreadful day came. "The enemy is coming! Nebuchadnezzar is coming! We are being attacked!" spread the news. At first, the people could not believe it; but it was true. And one terrible thing happened after the other. Their king was taken captive and carried away to Babylon where he was kept a prisoner. More than that, just as Jeremiah had said, the enemy burned the house of the Lord and stole the vessels of gold and silver. Twice the enemy came and not only the king and his family, but all the princes and mighty men of the army, ten thousand of them, were carried away as captives; and all the men able to do fine labor were taken away. The temple was destroyed. Jerusalem was a lonesome place. Jeremiah had been right. Evil had truly come out of the north and God had let it happen, because the people, even when coming to His house, had held evil in their hearts.

Biblical Materials for Further Research:

Ezra 5 and 6; Haggai—The temple rebuilt, refurnished, and rededicated

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HOW DOES THE CHURCH HELP ME TO DO GOD'S WORK?

(A Study Based upon the Contribution of the Synagogue to the Life of the Jewish People)

Materials for Research:

Biblical Materials: Deuteronomy 6:4-9—the words of the Shema, the words found in the phylacteries and mezuzahs; Leviticus 19:18—a law concerning love for neighbors; Deuteronomy 24:17-22—laws concerning treatment of the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow; Deuteronomy 26:12—the use of the tithe; Luke 4:16-17—Jesus teaches in the synagogue

Supplementary Materials: Pictures of synagogues (e.g., Tissot's "Jesus in the Synagogue") and modern churches; pictures of people serving the community as church members serve it; pictures of people who help in churches, ministers, janitors, children who bring flowers, etc.; pictures showing ways in which church offerings are used (Many of these can be found in magazines and church papers); pictures of a mezuzah and of a Pharisee wearing phylacteries and fringed coat, or actual mezuzahs and phylacteries*

*Sample mezuzahs and phylacteries may be ordered from Bleck Publishing Co., 31 W. 31st St., N. Y. (Olive wood mezuzah 3½" or 4½", 60¢. Tefilin phylacteries of leather, $4.00.)

Suggestions for Research:

Although it is generally believed that synagogues began to spring up in Palestine about the time of Ezra, we find very little mention of them in the Old Testament. By the time of Christ, they were well established in every community of over ten people and we find many references to them throughout the New Testament. Most of the details concerning the synagogue schools, the synagogue service itself, and the organization of the synagogue church are found only in extra-biblical literature and history. For that reason, it will be impossible for the children to do much Biblical research in the study of this question. Since the ceremonies and customs mentioned in this session's story are historically accurate, however, the children can think through it after the teacher's telling in order to discover the details they desire.

It would be well to begin the class session with the story, discuss it from purely a historical point of view in order to ferret out the customs of the people, and then consider it a little more deeply by leading the children to determine why it was that the Jewish people loved their synagogue so much, what it really meant to them, how it helped them do God's work. All of their discoveries should be listed on the board and might well be copied in their notebooks.

After this discussion, the children will enjoy looking up the words which were written on the papers in the phylacteries and mezuzahs and which were a part of the Shema which was said at the opening of the synagogue service. They will enjoy reading the words together, discussing their meaning, and possibly learning them by heart as Arioch did. They will enjoy looking up and reading the laws concerning the care of strangers, the fatherless, and the widows.

Possible Activities:

Discussing the things about the synagogue church which are like our own churches

Discussing ways in which the synagogue church helped people which are like ways in which our church helps us

Discussing things people in the synagogue church did which we do not do, and trying to think of reasons why we do not do them

Discussing things our church does which the synagogue church did not do, and trying to think of reasons why our churches started these new ways of working (e.g., national and foreign missions—current statistics may be obtained from Mission

Boards and up-to-date maps showing the attitudes of world governments toward the distribution of the Bible and the work of the American Bible Society can be ordered from the American Bible Society, Park Ave. and 57th Street, New York, N. Y.)

Making posters showing the work of the church in our town (A camera trip on which the class takes pictures of chapels, orphanages, hospitals, church schools, etc., might be interesting, informative, and inspirational and add much to the value of the posters. Denominational groups might take this up as independent units, or the group as a whole might make an interdenominational poster.)

Making a visit to a modern synagogue

Making a poster comparing the synagogue church with our churches today

Making a poster showing things that ten-year-olds can do in the church

Planning things we can do to help our church this summer

Making phylacteries (These can be made by running strips of cloth through empty match boxes in which have been placed the words of Deuteronomy 6:4-9.) and mezuzahs (A mezuzah is a tube-like piece of wood glued to a small board background, in which is written Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

Learning the Shema, Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Reciting the Shema with phylacteries tied on forehead and left arm

Making a large scroll, writing on it Deuteronomy 6:4, and Leviticus 19:18, and wrapping it in linen cloth as they did in the synagogue

Worship:

It would be rather effective if the children could, for their worship, plan a service based on the synagogue worship as described in the story, "Arioch and the Synagogue". The order of service might be something like the following:

The repetition of the "Shema" (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

The reading of the scrolls which have been placed on a stand at the front of the room (Deuteronomy 6:4; Leviticus 19:18)

A talk about love for God and service of God's people, given by one of the children

A hymn of praise

A closing prayer with all the "congregation" joining in the "Amen"

A Story Suggestion:

ARIOCH AND THE SYNAGOGUE

Arioch sat in the door of his new home and watched the boys hurry down the street. "Where are they going?" he wondered.

All of them were headed in the same direction, laughing and shouting to each other. They were all turning down the road which led out of town to the lake-side. He wondered what they were planning to do.

Soon the door of the house across the street opened and a boy of about twelve, a little older than himself, came out. He touched a little box on the door-post and said something to himself. When this little ceremony was over, he started out after the boys who had just passed by.

"Wait, wait!" cried Arioch. My, but he was glad that merchant in Babylon had taught him the language of this new country! "Wait, just a minute please. Where is everyone going this morning?"

The boy from across the street turned and then stopped. "Why, we are going to the synagogue school. All boys do. Aren't you going to come, too? My mother says that you have come to live in our town. I was visiting some friends in Dalmanutha when you moved in yesterday. That is why I did not come over when she welcomed you to our street. My name is Joda. Come with me now. We live so close, we must be friends."

And so it happened that Arioch, after getting permission from his mother, found himself walking down the road beside his new friend.

"Why do you build your school outside of your town?" asked Arioch when he saw that they were leaving the town for the open fields.

"Well, you see, our school isn't just a school," explained Joda. "It is a church, too. We call it a synagogue. And synagogues are usually built near rivers or lakes so that people can wash themselves before entering. God wants us to have clean hands and pure hearts when we come to pray to Him."

"My, how beautiful!" cried Arioch as they came around the bend and saw the little sun-baked brick house beside the lake. "How beautiful! Do we have to wash this morning?"

"No, not just for school," Joda replied. "You see, the washing in front of the church is not really done to wash away dirt. It is done to make us think about being holy before God. We just do it before our Sabbath worship."

When Arioch went into the synagogue building, he saw a strange sight. A group of boys between the ages of six and twelve were sitting in a circle on the floor. Sitting in front was an old man dressed as Arioch had never seen anyone dressed before. On his forehead was strapped a little box. On his left arm was one just like it. And his whole cloak was edged with a long purple fringe. He came to meet Arioch when he saw that Joda had brought a stranger to the school. His voice was pleasant when he spoke.

"Welcome to our school, my son. I knew your name and from where you have come. I am glad our friend, Joda, has brought you with him this morning. Have you ever before had training in the words of the law?"

"No," said Arioch, "I don't even know what they are. Do you think I can learn?"

"Surely," said the teacher. "Come, join us now."

And so began Arioch's schooling in the synagogue. Before the week was up, he knew the words of the Shema, "Hear O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might . . ." He knew, too, that these were the words which were in the strange little boxes, called phylacteries, which were on his teacher's head and arm and which were in the box, called a mezuzah, on the door-post of Joda's house, and that it was to remind him of these words that the teacher wore those long purple fringes on his coat.

And then came the Sabbath. He had been looking forward to this day ever since Joda had told him of the washing by the lake. And now it was here. Quickly he dressed and ran to meet Joda in the street. He almost felt that he, too, was one of God's chosen people, walking this way with them to the church. Maybe God would let him be a part of His family if he learned to worship Him in the right way.

When they reached the church, Arioch noticed that everyone was dropping money in a box by the door or placing bowls of grain or fruit or vegetables in a large container beside it. He felt embarrassed that he had nothing and asked Joda what it was for. "Why, that is for God," answered his friend. And Arioch wondered.

Once in the church, he felt very solemn. He and Joda sat near the back; for only the old or important people sat on front seats. But all at once he felt at home, for all had risen and were repeating together the words of the Shema, the very words he had learned in school, "Hear O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord;

and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might . . ."

While the ruler of the synagogue led in prayer, Arioch felt that God truly was listening to every word, and that He knew that he, Arioch, did want to know Him, too.

When the prayer was over, everyone was silent while the minister unwrapped the sacred scrolls from their linen bindings and placed them on a stand at the front of the room. Everyone was silent while they waited for someone to volunteer to read. And Arioch, watching, had the surprise of his life when he saw Joda get up, march up the aisle and take his stand behind the great Book. He listened, proudly, while Joda read the words of Habakkuk: "The Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him."

How he wished he could read like that! My, how wonderful it would be to be able to read well enough to stand in God's house before God's people and read the words of the Book. He knew that he was going to study hard so that some day he could do just this.

Throughout the sermon and the blessing which followed, Arioch kept thinking this one thought: "Some day I'll be able to read like that! Some day I'll be a part of God's family, too."

He could hardly wait to get home to tell his mother and father of everything that had happened. His mother would be glad that he wanted so badly to learn.

When he reached his house, however, he was met by a stranger and taken to his mother's room where she lay crying. She sat up when he came in and said, very quietly, "Your father was killed by a falling tree this morning, Son. You will have to be my helper now."

And so it happened that Arioch did not go with the boys to school the next week, but stayed at home to tend his baby brother while his mother went out into the barley fields to glean. All the happiness of his Sabbath was gone. He missed his father terribly. And now he was never going to have the chance to learn like other boys. Now he would never be able to stand in the synagogue as Joda had done. Now he would never have time to worship with the family of God.

As he sat on the steps one day, watching his small brother playing in the yard, three men whom he had seen at the door of the synagogue came up the street carrying great baskets on their arms. The three men stopped at his very house and spoke to him pleasantly.

"Is your mother in, my son?" said the first and oldest. "We have brought gifts from the church, for we know your sorrow and the poverty of your home."

Arioch gasped and said nothing. Could these men really be talking to him? Did they really care that his father had died and that his mother had so little money that she had to work in the fields all day? Were those three huge baskets of grain and fruits really for his family?

"You look surprised," said the second man. "You would not be if you knew the Book of our God. He commands us to give a tenth of all our goods to Him that we may take care of the stranger and the fatherless and the widow among us. Give these to your mother, my son. And tell her that she need no longer spend all her day gathering bread for her family. As long as you live in our midst, you shall not want."

When the baskets were placed safely in the house and the men had left, Arioch stood looking at them hardly believing his eyes. "I can go back to school again," he almost shouted in his joy. "And I really am a part of the family of God."

WHAT IS GOD'S PLAN FOR THE SUPPORT OF HIS CHURCH?

(A Study of Tithing)

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: Psalm 24:1 and Psalm 50:10—The earth and all its wealth belong to God; Leviticus 27:30, 32—One tenth of all that lives and grows belongs to God in a special way; Numbers 18:21—The tithes of the people supported the priests who served in the tabernacle; Deuteronomy 26:12—The tithe was used to feed the orphans, the widows, and the strangers in the land; Malachi 3:7-12—God promises a blessing for tithers; Luke 21:1-4—Jesus praises a gift from the heart; Matthew 23:23, 28—Tithing not backed by Christian living is useless; I Corinthians 16:2—Our giving should be regular, the amount depending on what we have; Genesis 28:10-22—Story of Jacob's decision to tithe.

Supplementary Materials:

Stories of tithers such as Rockefeller, Colgate, etc. (Many such illustrations can be found in the book *Bible Stewardship* by J. E. Dillard, published by Executive Committee, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tennessee.)

Free leaflet: "God's Acre", (ordered from "The Committee of Stewardship and Finance", Presbyterian Church U. S., Henry Grady Bldg., Atlanta, Georgia.)

Free literature on tithing from any denominational stewardship headquarters

Suggested Activities:

Repeating and discussing Psalm 24:1-2 and Psalm 50:19:

Thinking of how narrow-visioned it is, when all the world belongs to God, for one nation to say, "This is mine," and for people to say, "This is mine."

Thinking of how God has given us all things as trusts to use for Him

Thinking of how we can show God that we acknowledge His ownership:

We pay rent to the owner of a house we use.

We pay taxes to the rulers of the country of which our property is a part.

We can give back to God a part of all the good things that come into our hands, to show that we recognize His ownership.

Looking up and discussing laws concerning the tithe: (See Materials for Research)

Looking up the meaning of the word "tithe"

Listing different Biblical uses of the tithe; thinking of how each of these uses was helping God care for the people in His world; trying to think of what would have happened to the church, the orphans, the widows, and the strangers if the people had not tithed.

Looking up and discussing God's promise to tithers: (See Materials for Research)

Discussing the lives of people in whom this promise has been fulfilled: e.g. Rockefeller who tithed the first dollar he ever made and every dollar after that, is one of the world's greatest philanthropists; Colgate who when he became a Christian talked to an old sea captain about how he wanted to live Christianity to the fullest and received the reply: "Well, you are in the soap business. Make the best soap you can. Sell it a pound for a pound. Give a tenth of all you make to the Lord." Colgate followed the advice of the sea captain and became one of the world's most successful and generous citizens.

Thinking of this incident: Thomas Kane of Chicago offered one hundred dollars to any man who felt that tithing had made him poorer. He received thousands of replies. But each person who answered told of how life had been richer and fuller since he had begun tithing. Some had received a blessing for their hearts in joy. Others had received a blessing in material things. No one claimed the one hundred dollars.

Thinking of Jesus' knowledge of the spirit back of the poor widow's gift and his knowledge of the spirit back of our gifts, thinking of the fact that He knows when we are giving just for the "show", as the Scribes and Pharisees were doing.

Reading and discussing Paul's teachings about how the work of the church was helped by regular giving, and of how our gifts should increase as our incomes increase

Thinking of ways of tithing:

Ten per cent of allowances
Ten per cent of garden produce (Children who grow vegetables or flowers can sell them or give them to the needy and sick.)
Ten per cent of eggs (Children who raise chickens can give eggs to sick and needy or give proceeds from the sale to the church.)
Ten per cent of money earned in any way
Ten per cent of gifts given to us
Ten per cent of time

Illustrative Incidents:

Archie Freeman, young seminary student was, one summer, acting as pastor for several small churches. One of the churches whose membership only numbered sixty, promised to give seventy-five dollars towards his support. Although seventy-five dollars seemed a lot of money, the people thought that surely they would have it by the end of the summer.

One little seven-year-old girl, who knew that she would have no money at the end of the summer if she did not plan ahead, asked her father for a hen to care for and feed, whose eggs would be hers to sell. Her request was granted. By the end of the summer she had earned two dollars, her gift toward the "preacher fund."

The day for the final offering came. All gave what they had. But, to the church's surprise and embarrassment the total offering only amounted to thirty-five dollars. "This will never

do," they said one to another. "We are not keeping our promise."

The people in the church felt worse about the shortage in salary than the young minister did. "If we had done as our youngest member," they said, "we would have had almost twice as much as we needed. We could have paid Mr. Freeman and had something left over for missions. We will have to begin planning ahead."

In one southern community every child was given a "patch" of land on which to raise cotton. When all was grown and picked it was brought together, baled, sold, and the offering given to the church in solemn ceremony. This proved to be one of the most inspirational services of the entire year, anticipated by all.

Trying to imagine the wonderful things that could be done for God in His world if every church member were a tither.

Considering the question in Malachi: "Will a man rob God?" Asking ourselves the question; Determining to rob God no more

Recording class findings in class project and in individual notebooks

Materials for Worship:

Any of above Scripture references
Hymn: We Give Thee But Thine Own
Sentence prayers rededicating material things

A True Story:

THE CRIPPLE'S TITHE

He was so crippled that he could not work; and in the land where he lived there were no homes for the sick. And so he sat by the road and trusted his life to the pity of the passers by. "Give," he said, "Give to a man who can not earn."

And people did give. Many small coins dropped into his crude, clay bowl, but never enough, never enough to buy himself a warm coat, never enough to make his stomach feel truly full.

One day, however, he hobbled to the outside of a small white-washed building into which a number of people were going. These people smiled at him and gave a little more than most. In a short time they were all within and no more came. Through the open door the cripple could hear music and the murmur of voices. Interested, he crept up the steps and slipped into a bench at the back of the room.

He did not know it was a church he was in and that daily services were being held that the people of his city might come to the Saviour. He did know, however, that he liked the sound of the man's

voice and that the story the man was telling was the most interesting and encouraging he had ever heard. It was the story of a God who really cared for men, for the poor as well as for the rich, for the sick as well as for the healthy.

Day after day, the cripple came and took his seat outside the chapel door. He was receiving more money now, but not enough to satisfy with food a man who had been hungry for many long years. Day after day the cripple slipped into the church after the service had begun. Day after day, he so heard of God's love that he began to love God in return and to believe on his Son Jesus Christ. One day he heard something new: "All things belong to God. We can show our love to Him by giving a tenth of all that comes into our possession. If we love and serve Him, He will surely bless us."

The crippled beggar began to think: "I have never given anything to anyone; for I have never had enough even for myself. And yet I love God. Surely His command and His promise are meant for me, too. I will follow His plan."

After the service, he waited to speak to the minister. "I want to be a Christian," he said. "I want to give to God a tenth of all that people give to me."

The minister was glad because of the beggar's decision and encouraged him in his plans. "But," he said, "God would rather see you working than begging."

"Then maybe He will help me to get started in some work," answered the beggar, "although I can not think what it would be."

The next day the deacons of the little church saw two pennies dropped from a cripple hand. "God has blessed me," said the giver, "I received twice as much in my little clay bowl today."

Before long, three pennies fell from the shaky hand, then four, then five.

The people who came to the chapel one day were surprised to see a tray of candy beside the begging bowl.

"Won't you buy sweets?" cried the owner with shining eyes. "God has blessed me. I am able to sell as well as to beg."

As the cripple's offerings increased, his business increased until, before long, a stand appeared under the little candy tray and the begging bowl disappeared. After several years, the cripple sat on a bench in a tiny shop, a candy shop of his own.

"God has blessed me," he said to all who came to buy. "Out of my love to Him I gave a tenth of all I received; and look what He has done for me! It is far more than I could have asked for or imagined. God is One who keeps His promise, yea, more than keeps it!"

And so the days went by. More and more gifts were received into the offering plate from the cripple's pew. More and more people came to worship in the little chapel, for a cripple had come to their village and said, "Look what the Lord has done for me! The earth is the Lord's. Go worship in His house and own Him as your King."

WHY DO WE HAVE DENOMINATIONS?

(A Study of the Relationship of Denominations to the Church Universal)

Materials for Research:

Biblical Materials: I Corinthians 3:4-9—We are God's fellow-workers in the church; I Corinthians 12:12-14—As Christ is the head of the church, we are all members of the body; Luke 9:49—All who are working in Christ's name, whether they are members of our groups or not, are working for Him.

Supplementary Materials: Stories of the leaders of various denominations who have helped to build Christ's kingdom: e.g., Luther, Knox and Calvin, Wesley, Smyth, Campbell, etc.; hymns written by members of different denominations used by all:*

"Blest be the Tie that Binds," written by a Baptist
"Love Divine All Loves Excelling," by a Methodist
"Away in a Manger," by a Lutheran
"Dear Lord and Father of Mankind," by a Quaker
"O Love that Will Not Let Me Go," by a Presbyterian
"O Little Town of Bethlehem," by an Episcopalian
"Lead Kindly Light," by a Catholic

Statistics from mission boards showing home and foreign needs

Possible Activities:

Talking of how people express similar feelings in different ways: e.g., in Rio, men kiss each other in gladness as they meet on the street. Imagine your father's embarrassment if an old friend were to kiss him on the street of your town. Do the people in Rio care more for each other than the people in the United States?

Talking of the advantages and disadvantages of having all the people on your street live in one large hotel:

Advantages:

Saving of labor in cooking, etc.
Saving of gas or energy in going to see neighbors

*Adapted from list in *Adventures in Christian Living*, Grade Seven, Unit II.

Saving of coal in heating
Etc.

Disadvantages: Families have conflicting habits: e.g.,

Some like to get up early and go to bed early while others like to do the opposite. Those awake might disturb those who wished to sleep.

Some like to eat at one hour, some at another.

Some have children who make noise playing. Others are old and want quiet.

Talking of how just as all families are members of the family of God, all churches are members of the Church of God.

Discussing how church families do things differently from each other just as individuals and their families differ in habits and ways of acting. Looking briefly at some of the differences between churches:

Differences in forms of worship:

One church has no set worship. All members come and sit quietly together in the church until God's Spirit gives one of them a message. Having received the message he tells the others of it. Others, who have been meditating on God's word and praying, listen to his message and then share theirs. These people act in this way bcause the quiet of the church helps them to worship God and hear Him speak to them in their hearts.

Some church families come in and out of the church sanctuary, or church auditorium, in perfect silence and while in worship try to forget everything except God and His worship. This custom helps this family to feel close to God.

Some church families like to show their friendliness to each other in the church building. Because of this they greet each other as they enter the church and the minister talks to them in a "friend to friend" manner. This informal service helps these families to feel closer to the friendly Christ.

Differences in government:

Some churches are governed by bishops which are appointed by a central church government.

Some churches are governed by the vote of all the ministers in the denomination, ministers who are chosen by the individual churches.

Some churches are governed by the vote of the congregation.

Some churches are governed by a combination of these methods.

Differences in understanding of the Bible: e.g., the interpretation of teachings of baptism:

Some church families believe that babies should be baptized because of the fact that Jesus and other Jewish babies were brought to the temple when they were very young.

Some church families believe that a person should be baptized only when he is old enough to understand what the baptism means, because Jesus was baptized when He was grown and when He told His disciples to baptize he said nothing about baptizing babies.

Some believe that baptism should be by immersion because the Bible says that Jesus was baptized of John "in Jordan" and Philip and the Ethiopian went down "into the water" for baptism.

Some believe that since the people in Old Testament times were purified by being "sprinkled" with water that the people of New Testament times probably acted in the same manner and that John standing in the Jordan used Jordan water to sprinkle Jesus and that Philip did the same for the Ethiopian.

Some believe that one may be truly baptized without using water.

Differences in ways of having communion with Christ:

Some church families like to go up to the altar to take communion and some like to take communion quietly in their seats.

Some church families like to have their prayers written out for them so they can read them together and think about the words which great men have prayed to God; some like to word their own prayers to God.

Discussing how just as a father can love all of his children equally well even though every child is different, so God can love every church equally, even though those churches differ in some points.

Discussing how the central belief of every church, belief in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, is the same and unites them all

Discussing Scripture passages listed, to discover how denominations should feel toward one another and work together

Discussing the fact that there is plenty for every church to do; that there need be no feeling of competition or jealousy; that

a member of one church family should feel happy when he sees that another church family is growing; that there is work which all the church families should get together to do; looking at some of the unfinished business of our churches:

85,000,000 or 65% of our population are outside of the church*

30,000,000 children and young people in our country do not go to church and have no religious teaching in the home or school

30,000,000 foreigners are in our country who need the friendship of church people and the church's Saviour

4,500,000 criminals are in our country, which number is three and a half times as many people as we have in our colleges. These criminals cost the American people $15,000,000,000 a year, or $120 from every man, woman, and child in the country (Think of what this money could do if it did not have to be spent for crime!)

In 1939 Americans spent $5,000,000,000 on liquor, only a little less than half as much as they spent on food. (And yet lots of people are hungry!) In 1939 we spent $15.33 on education and $38.60 on liquor per person. (Think how our schools could be improved with that money!)

There are many, many poor and unhappy and sick in our land, in uncounted numbers.

Studying a current map of the non-Christian world, or current foreign missionary statistics, previously ordered from some mission board

Deciding on some things ten-year-olds can do to help their churches meet the needs of their country and the world (sending boxes to church orphanages and mountain schools, writing to Christians in other lands, giving to carry on the work of the church, praying for missionaries in other lands)

Incorporating discoveries in class project and individual notebooks

Thanking God for our churches and the privilege of working in them

*Adapted from the annual report of the Home Mission Council of North America, December, 1940.

WHAT DOES THE CHURCH MEAN TO ME AND WHAT CAN I MEAN TO MY CHURCH?

A Review Session

Materials for Research:

Biblical materials covered in year's work
I Corinthians 12:12-31

Possible Activities:

Discussing how the church helps us to know God
- Thinking over the findings of the unit "What is God Like?"
- Realizing that in our churches and Sunday-schools we have a chance to learn more about Him
- Talking of how church members help each other understand God
- Talking of how group worship helps us to worship
- Talking of how the church building itself helps us to think of God

Discussing how the church helps us to live up to God's laws:
- Remembering the ten commandments and their meanings for us
- Discussing how the church and Sunday-school helps us to understand them even better
- Talking of how the church helps us decide to follow these laws
- Thinking about how much easier it is to live up to God's laws in a group which is trying to live up to them than it is to live up to them among those who are not trying
- Thinking of how it is easier to live God's laws when we are praying for each other as we do in the church than when we try to live without prayer

Discussing how the church helps us to help others
- Remembering the ways of helping discussed when answering the question, "How does the church help me to do God's work in the world?"
- Remembering the discussion about work which we can do through our churches, the discussion held while answering the question "Why do we have denominations?"

Discussing how wonderfully happy we can be to be considered a part of the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:21-31) and what a privilege it is to be a "hand" or a "foot" or a "mouth" directed by the Head, the Christ Himself

Listening to a story:

The Live Coal*

"Come in, Jim," said Dr. Blackmore. "I'm so very glad to see you back in town."

*Retold incident from published story, *source unknown.*

"Well, I'm mighty glad to be here," said Jim. "And I am glad to be back in this church. This is what I miss most in our new home. I don't like the minister of our church, there, and don't get a thing from his sermons. I have almost decided to leave the church, to take my letter out and to worship by myself. I can read the Bible and pray and listen to the radio at home. Don't you think I'm right, Dr. Blackmore?"

Dr. Blackmore looked at Jim for a moment and then looked into the fire of glowing coals. Presently he took the tongs, lifted a coal out of the bed of fire and placed it by itself on the hearth. He said nothing.

In the silence Jim gazed at the coal as it glowed brightly, then not so brightly, then quite dimly, and finally not at all.

"I see what you mean," said Jim. "I won't leave the church."

Discussing the story:

What did Dr. Blackmore mean?

Why did the coal grow dim and die when it was taken away from the other coals?

What would have happened to the fire and to the room if all the coals had been set out each by itself on the hearth?

Could one coal have warmed the room even it it had been able to keep glowing?

In what ways are coals and church-members alike?

What can you do in church to "keep your coal alive" on the Sundays when you cannot understand the sermon? (One girl made a habit of taking a part of the service she could understand, the text, the Scripture reading, a story told by the minister, or a hymn, and making up a sermon from that to preach to herself.)

What can I do to help "keep other coals alive?" How important am I to my church?

Reading and thinking about the poem: "I Am The Church,"* by Beulah Hughes

Discussing its last lines:

"I am the Church!
Without me, civilization must crumble!
With me is eternity!"

Closing with sentence prayers: Asking God to help us so to work together in our churches and so to glow with Christ's love that our church will be a real light in the world for Him.

*Found in *Christ and the Fine Arts,* by Cynthia Pearl Maus.

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